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MEZZANINE





# THE HOMILIST,

CONDUCTED BY THE

REV. DAVID THOMAS.

VOL. VII.



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MEZZANINE

"I KNOW WELL I OUGHT NOT TO HAVE ANY DESIGN FOR MYSELF, WHICH ADMITS NOT OF SUBORDINATION TO THE INTEREST AND HONOUR OF THE GREAT GOD AND MY REDEEMER, AND WHICH IS NOT ACTUALLY SO SUBORDINATED."

JOHN HOWE.

SECOND EDITION.

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## P R E F A C E.

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IN presenting the SEVENTH VOLUME of "*The Homilist*" to the public, the Editor is happy to say, that the circulation has been gradually increasing from the beginning ; and he trusts that the work has been improving in merit. It has won enthusiastic friends amongst the most learned and thoughtful teachers in all churches. He cannot better describe this volume, than by quoting the preface to the former ones.

First : The book has no *finish*. The Editor had not only not the time to give an artistic finish to his productions, but not even the *design*. Their incompleteness is *intentional*. He has drawn some marble slabs together, and hewn them roughly ;—but has left other hands to delineate minute features, and to polish them into beauty. He has dug up from the Biblical mine some precious ore, smelted a little, but left all the smithing to others. He has presented "germs" which, if sown in good soil, under a free air and an open sky, will produce fruit that may draw many famishing spirits into the vineyard of the Church.

Secondly : The book has no *denominationalism*. It has no special reference to "*our* body," or to "*our* church." As denominational strength is not necessarily *soul* strength, nor




denominational religion necessarily the religion of humanity, it is the aim of "*The Homilist*" to minister that which universal man requires. It is for man as a citizen of the universe, and not for him as the limb of a sect.

Thirdly : The book has no *polemical Theology*. The Editor—holding, as he does, with a tenacious grasp, the *cardinal* doctrines which constitute what is called the "orthodox creed"—has, nevertheless, the deep, and ever-deepening conviction, first, that such creed is but a very small portion of the truth that God has revealed, or that man requires ; and that no theological system can fully represent all the contents and suggestions of the great book of God ; and, secondly, that systematic theology is but means to an end. *Spiritual morality is that end*. Consequently to the *heart* and *life* every Biblical thought and idea should be directed. Your systems of divinity the Author will not disparage ; but his impression is, that they can no more answer the purpose of the Gospel, than *pneumatics* can answer the purpose of the atmosphere. In the case of Christianity, as well as the air, the world can live without its scientific truths ; but it must have the free flowings of their vital elements. Coleridge has well said, "Too soon did the doctors of the Church forget that the heart—the moral nature—was the beginning and the end, and that truth, knowledge, and insight were comprehended in its expansion."

The Editor would record his grateful acknowledgments to those free spirits of all churches, who have so earnestly rallied round him, to the many who have encouraged him by their letters, and to those, especially, who have aided him by their valuable contributions. May the "last day" prove that the help rendered has been worthily bestowed ; and that "*The Homilist*" did something towards the spiritual education of humanity, in its endeavors to bring the Bible, through the instrumentality of the pulpit, into a more immediate and practical contact with the every-day life of man !

DAVID THOMAS.

*Loughborough Park.*



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All the articles in the Volume are written by the Editor, with the exception of those which have their Authors' names attached to them.



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# A HOMILY

ON

## The True Ministry.

“A good minister of Jesus Christ.”—1 Tim. iv. 6.

THE winter wind has wailed its threnody over the grave of another year. That year has passed beyond the reach of improvement ;—the page, beauteous or disfigured, is now in the all-preserving hand of the King ! An oppressive sense of *responsibility* affects our being at this solemn juncture. A YEAR has expired ; a YEAR has been born ! The past is where our voice reaches not, and the future stands arrayed in mystic uncertainty. Into the minute details of the mysterious TO-BE we cannot pry. Its bitter woes, its thrilling joys,—Its heart-testing burdens, its mind-illuminating glories, are wisely concealed by Sovereign Love. Heaven gives us life in *moments* :—the heart knows not the expiration of its lease ! Of all coming events, however, there is one most certain, viz., INDIVIDUAL DEATH ! Editor, Writer, Reader, must die ! What then ? Let us “weary not in well-doing.” The opening year directs an appeal to every heart ; it calls us to love, labor, and self-sacrifice. It *may* be the year of our death ! Ere its sun set we may be struck with the mortal dart ! Profoundly conscious of this possibility we inscribe the opening page of another *Homilist* with gratitude and hope ?—the significant representatives of the actual PAST and the untested FUTURE.

Our pregnant and suggestive theme is *The True Ministry* ; a theme whose importance we cannot exaggerate, and whose

matter we cannot exhaust. We ask for unprejudiced and earnest analysis.

IS THERE NOT TOO MUCH PREACHING? The question is not whether there is not too much *teaching*, or too much *endeavor* made for the moral advancement of the race; but whether too many public appearances are not expected of the same man by the same congregation? It would be interesting to enquire whether any plan could be developed for the more effective ministration of the Divine Word, and the better sustainment of congregational interest. It is too evident that, as a rule, the pulpit is not attractive to the millions. To whatever other cause we trace this non-attractiveness, it is clear that it cannot be found in the Gospel's want of majesty, power, and utility. Whatever may be said about the unpalatableness of the Gospel to the unrenewed heart, we cannot for a moment allow that such is the secret of the little attention excited by the British Pulpit. Perhaps preaching is too *common*; familiarity may have engendered indifference, if not contempt. While it is impossible to put forth too much energy in the dissemination of Christian Truth, it is a question whether too much of that energy is not expended in a multiplicity of *public* appearances at the sense of less ostentatious but more useful *private* labor. We adjure dogmatism; we simply suggest the idea in order to quicken the thoughtful to devout and determined consideration.

I. GOD HAS NEVER LEFT THE CHURCH WITHOUT TRUE MINISTERS. Elishas have ever been forthcoming on the removal of the senior prophets. As the latter have ascended to glory, the former have caught the inspiration of their spirit, and the badge of their power. The necessity and dignity of the pulpit have been thus divinely attested. The pulpit is charged with the most transcendently glorious and responsible mission. It represents the earnest teaching and pleading of Christ; and must gather round itself the most resplendent glory, or the most intolerable darkness. The

minister of Christ occupies the most momentous position which a moral agent can assume, for the simple reason that his life is spent in acting upon the immortal destinies of his species. When he *warns*, his words vibrate in the depth of the soul ; when he *expostulates*, it is on subjects affecting eternal well-being ; when he *reasons*, it is that he may bend the human intellect in devout subjection to the Infinite Mind ; and when he *allures*, it is to the highest goal to which the mightiest energies can aspire. Fearful, therefore, beyond figure or utterance, is ministerial responsibility !

II. THE TRUE MINISTER FEELS AN IRRESISTIBLE IMPULSE TO THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE GREAT TRUTHS OF CHRISTIANITY. It is not with him a question of self-ease, or social advancement, or personal popularity : the inspiration rings in his spirit, and stirs his tongue to thrilling utterances. The golden crown which *commerce* offers has no attraction for *him* : the sceptre which *science* would bestow cannot charm him from his eminence ; and the pen of *literature* would be scorned if he could not convert it into another *tongue* for the more prolonged annunciation of Gospel Truth. The lover of popularity, or the mercenary gold-seeker may steal his way into the pulpit, but such a man will quit his position under promise of wider fame, or ampler revenue. Not so with the genuine minister : his life-cry is " Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel ; " and to him it is as necessary to proclaim the salvation of Christ, as it is for the earth to revolve around the solar orb. Not only so, but the true minister evermore *appropriates* the external to the out-working of his glorious mission :—he converts everything into pulpit-property. The heavens are shorn of their splendor to radiate his themes ; the earth has no treasure which he considers too precious to be appropriated to his sublime purpose ; the melodious harmonies of music, the profoundest discoveries of science, the most gorgeous delineations of poetry, are alike claimed by the true minister as auxiliaries in the development of a mission infinitely beneficent and glorious.

How can this noble consecration be explained? Only, we contend, on the principle of a DIVINE CALL TO THE MINISTRY. Ministers must be Divinely-elected to their work. But how is this Divine call to be attested? God will doubtless produce *strong conviction* on the mind and conscience of the chosen one; the individual will feel irresistible Spirit-promptings to the holy work: all earthly considerations will be lost in the consuming desire to promote human salvation; there will be the powerful "constraint" of the "love of Christ." These will form the *subjective* intimations of the Divine will. Added to these will be external demonstrations of approval: "the Word" will be proclaimed successfully; moral "signs and wonders" will accompany the advent of the true servant; and the loud Amen of the *Church* will confirm the ordination of God. "True ministers cannot be manufactured out of ordinary men,—men ordinary in talent and character,—in a given number of years, and then passed by the imposition of hands into the sacred office;—ministers, when real, are all special creations of the grace of God." \* Most true is this witness: we are prone to forget the *vocational* character of the ministry;—and forgetting this, it degenerates into mere *pulpit-professionalism*.

III. THE TRUE MINISTER EVER EXALTS CHRIST, AS THE ONE ONLY LIVING AND DIVINE SAVIOUR. All his sermons are charged with tidings of the Saviour's power and willingness to save. He feels no more monotony in the repeated story of the Cross, than he feels in the daily sunshine, or the steady march of the seasons. He *lives* to preach Christ;—were there no Christ to preach, life would lose its charm and happiness become an impossibility. What joy is there in arguing a number of bloodless propositions into logical existence? When they are all vindicated, and marshalled in scholastic array, what has been gained? Nothing, in sooth, but a "valley of dry bones." The most monstrous sham is a

\* Hugh Miller's *Schools and Schoolmasters*, p. 153.



*Christless sermon.* I care not if it be delivered with Demosthenic fervor, or Tully-like gracefulness,—if it be adorned with poetic jewels, or blaze with the fire of transcendent genius ;—if CHRIST be not its chief ornament it is an intolerable mockery of my best nature and of my deepest necessities. What an empty well is to the wilderness-pilgrim, a Christless sermon is to the soul which thirsts for God.

What, then, is the ideal of a true sermon? May such a question be asked after an experiment of eighteen centuries? Bold enough to propound the enquiry, we hope for valor sufficient to answer it. If the New Testament sermons are not beneath the notice of our modern students, we may refer to them for reply. Behold their **BREVITY**! Short as an April shower they distil richest blessings on the heart. The tedious, the elaborate, the speculative, where are these? Behold their **POSITIVITY**! There is no *wavering* on the part of the inspired preachers: you look in vain for terms of doubt and uncertainty; their's is the noble dogmatism which ever characterizes the teacher who communicates truths in which he thoroughly believes. There is no ambiguity in the Divine sermon, "Ye must be born again," or in the declaration, "He that believeth shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned." Woe to the man who tampers with these solemn dicta :—he insults God, and with his own hand enkindles the fire of self-torment! Behold the **PERSONALITY** of the New Testament sermons! Though addressed to crowds, each hearer feels the *individuality* of the appeal ;—the arrow quivers in every heart! Vapid generalizations would have passed as an unheeded wind; but those words of lightning arrested universal attention. Behold the **PRACTICALNESS** of the inspired sermon! Its burden was one of life or of death,—it bore no marks of learned trifling, or pedantic exhibition; *heaven or hell* was the direct and momentous choice!

What then? These models must be reproduced if the modern ministry would be clothed with apostolic power. Brevity, positivity, personality, practicalness, must form

the characteristics of the sermon. Brevity must be distinguished from obscurity ; positivity from arrogance ; personality from reproach ; and practicalness from self-merit and legality. Brevity should not be the result of indolence ; positivity of self-will ; personality of petty revenge ;—nor should practicalness be indulged at the expense of the purely doctrinal and experimental. Happy the man in whom these characteristics combine, as the diversified hues blend in the covenant bow !

IV. ALL TRUE MINISTERS WILL NOT SECURE THE SAME KIND, OR THE SAME EXTENT, OF SUCCESS. Success, in the popular acceptance of the term, is a most equivocal test of capability and earnestness :—great multitudes of hearers are not an infallible proof of pulpit efficiency or Divine approbation. Some men's success is as much to be estimated by the numbers they drive away, as other men's success is to be measured by the numbers they attract. The intellectual mould of the preacher will determine the class of auditors surrounding the pulpit. Preacher and people must be homogeneous. The preacher will either raise the people to his level, or sink himself to their's, or expel them from his presence. There is a class of people who are ever attracted by the novel and startling, the ludicrous and grotesque. In a country town a mountebank can ensure a larger attendance than many open-air preachers. A band of soldiers often summons more spectators than there are hearers in Church and Chapel ; nay, so odd is our poor humanity, that sometimes more persons assemble at a dog-fight than at a prayer-meeting. I make no comparison between the *kinds* of persons so seen ; it would be degrading to do so,—I allude only to the preponderance of numbers, and seek only to establish the affirmation that *numbers* are not the criterion of true and useful success.

But it may be impatiently asked, “ Why *theorise* about the true minister ? It is easy to sketch the mysterious personage in ink, but how can the living reality be produced ?

We want to *see* this imagined perfection, breathing life and power from his regal pulpit: it were better to *see* than to *hear of* your model-preacher." Undoubtedly:—but our help in that direction may be trivial. See, here is a youth who has acquitted himself creditably in the Sabbath School,—who has also evangelized in the villages; and as the Gospel has been proclaimed in his simple but natural strain, men have trembled and cried for a Saviour. This young man is "recommended" to a college. There he pours over, most properly, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin Lexicons and Grammars. Not only so, but he retouches his knowledge of mathematics and pushes his way into the realm of angles and curves, most assiduously. He intermeddles with chemistry, and seeks an acquaintance with natural history. We ask him to pause for a moment in his multifarious researches to inform us what he is doing: and what answer does he return? Studying how to preach? Discovering the best means of winning souls? Qualifying himself to preside efficiently over the affairs of a Church?—Shame on thee, O reader, to suggest such vulgar words to a "*student*;" you ought to have known that the young man is *working for a* "DEGREE." He is aiming to affix letters to his name, believing, possibly, that these will help him to affix "seals to his ministry." The young man next "*studies theology*;" he is also introduced to two grim entities bearing the respective names of Homiletics and Hermeneutics; and after laboring some time longer in various pursuits he finds that his "*curriculum*" is completed, and he must look out for a "*sphere of usefulness*." Of course he will soon find that *John Simpleman* could have found no such "*sphere*," but the REV. JOHN LEXICON, B.A., M.A., LL.B., will only have to open his lips in order to enchant the most illustrious congregation. Let us watch him. He ascends the pulpit. The devotional exercises are conducted with most decorous precision, and now the last verse of the second hymn is being sung: he stoops,—what is he doing? Hush! He is only placing *his sermon* in the Bible, and surely there

can be no harm in *that*. The preacher (?) reads. His page is full of learned criticism. Greek and Hebrew idioms he discusses in masterly style ; he settles "genuine readings," and determines the discussions of erudite Doctors ; and having arranged his subject under *three* heads, and *three* subdivisions under each, he concludes by stating *three* points of "application." Could more be reasonably desired? Has he not preached a "sermon?" He has indeed, but who cares for it? His hearers have, during the week been engaged in the hard matter-of-fact affairs of life ; they have been doubting, hoping, struggling in their spiritual course ; their minds are occupied with thoughts of an earthly nature, and when they entered the house of God it was that they might eat the manna and drink the water of life. They desired to hear the cheerful voice of a brother, breathing into their spirit words of light, and hope, and joy ; expressing their wants at the throne of grace, and imploring the forgiveness and benediction of heaven. What becomes of the "intellectual" preacher? Alas! his auditors become numerically weaker Sunday after Sunday ; and the "learned" minister himself advertises his facilities for "preparing young gentlemen for the University!" Say not that our picture is over-drawn: allowing something on this score, who will venture to assert that it has no original? Granting, indeed, for the sake of charity, that the foregoing is an exceptional instance, we must confess the distressing inefficiency of many who have passed their academic course in the most commended manner.

Let us suggest a remedy, or rather a preventive. Suppose that the Churches selected, according to the best of their discrimination, suitable young men for the ministry. Let these young men be placed under the supervision of *powerful preachers*, who should superintend their strictly ministerial and pastoral education. The young men would thus receive *practical* training : coming into direct personal contact with their teachers, in the domestic circle,—standing

side by side with them in the Church-meeting,—accompanying them, whenever practicable, in their pastoral visitations,—frequently preaching in their presence,—receiving the benefit of their experienced judgment on every important matter, reading theological and other works, under their direction,—and at all times reaping the advantage of their criticism. What result might naturally be expected from such a course? Undoubtedly, the production of practical first-class, well-tested ministers of the Gospel. The young men would leave these domestic seminaries with a considerable measure of *actual experience*, and though no literary “degree” might adorn their names, they would possess a “degree” of moral efficiency and business-habit of unspeakably greater value in the discharge of their exalted mission. The domestic seminaries should be formed in various parts of the empire. Means for their financial support could be obtained, as the funds of the present collegiate institutions are realized; and in cases where the preliminary education of the candidate had been neglected, arrangements could be made for locating such candidates in neighborhoods where easy access to literary culture is obtainable. Meanwhile, what a blessing would such young men be to the minister, his Church, and the neighborhood at large! In conducting schools, forming district prayer-meetings, preaching in the open air and adjacent villages, promoting the circulation of pure literature, and engaging in every variety of moral and spiritual enterprise, they would be qualifying themselves for truly useful and blessed life. The supreme object of collegiate training should be the production of *preachers*; if the scholar and preacher can be *combined* in the same person, so much the better; but in all cases everything should be subordinate to the glorious design of preparing POWERFUL PREACHERS OF THE GOSPEL.

Supposing our idea to be realized, there are two things which ought not to be expected of a minister:—

First: *Uniform brilliance and power of address.* Cir-



cumstances over which he may have no control may occur to influence the mind of the minister. Physical derangement, domestic affliction, social annoyance, and other events, may transpire, which will materially affect pulpit-preparation. Moreover the *subject* is not uniformly of the same arousing nature. Different themes require different modes of treatment. What would be suitable to one, might be most unsuitable to another. In physical creation we have the most redundant variety: sometimes a genial *calm* prevails; and anon the *tempest* asserts its sway. There are objects *stupendous* and *minute*. The sun himself is occasionally bedimmed by intercepting clouds. In the BIBLE also, we have the most profuse variety of style: glowing imagery, concatenated arguments, unadorned narrative, thrilling eloquence. Such being the case, it is most unreasonable to expect any minister, however powerful in mind, to be continually delivering orations or sermons equal in splendor and in popular effect.—Specially would this be the case in relation to *stated* ministers. Appearing thrice a week, at least, before the same congregation, it is impossible that they should maintain the same majesty of thought and diction on all subjects year after year.

Secondly: *Universality of literary attainment*. Some people are unreasonable enough to expect a minister to be an encyclopædia of information. Going from house to house he must acquit himself in masterly style on every question. He is to be a profound antiquarian,—a skilful linguist,—a minute geographer,—an accomplished historian, and to combine in himself the most diversified intellectual excellences. We are not over stating the case; a host of confirmatory evidence stands round our page, and is only over-passed because our position is known to be impregnable. The minister's supreme object should be to excel in the PULPIT, and having achieved *that*, other qualifications should be considered subordinate.

What the ministry *might* be! With subjects so vitally important and intrinsically so glorious, the Minister of

Christ should tower immeasurably above all rivals. The promise of Divine benediction is his. He is the coadjutor of God! Brothers! "OUR SUFFICIENCY IS OF GOD!" Let us betake ourselves to the "throne of the heavenly grace;" for our strength must be maintained by prayer. The suppliant leaves the Altar clothed with power; the breath of his own prayer is returned into his spirit as an inspiration from heaven! The hope of the ministry is in PRAYER. To the *devout* mind the sacred page is lighted with unearthly splendor; on the *prayerful* intellect the noblest thoughts alight, in their descent from the Eternal Intelligence; on the *contrite* heart God bestows the most enriching bliss. Minister of Christ! would'st thou study profitably? *Pray much.* Would'st thou preach with soul-arousing energy? *PRAY MUCH.* Would'st thou edify the believer, reclaim the wanderer, abash the blasphemer, and thrill the indifferent? *PRAY MUCH.* "Them that honour me I will honour." The pulpit of the prayerful minister will be the scene of most brilliant conquest,—from it will stream the banner of glorious triumph; and instead of appropriating the honor to himself, the minister will exclaim, "I can do all things through CHRIST which strengtheneth me." Brother! farewell: ponder these words, and accept the wish that thou mayest be "A GOOD MINISTER OF JESUS CHRIST."

*Banbury.*

JOSEPH PARKER.

# The Genius of the Gospel.

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ABLE expositions of the Gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities, alluded to by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanted amongst us. But the eduction of its widest truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographic, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of spiritual study, but to reveal its spiritual results.

THIRTY-SIXTH SECTION. Matt. xii. 14—21.

SUBJECT:—*The Glory of True Gentleness as Illustrated in Christ.*

It would be difficult to decide, with certainty, the exact place which this passage holds in the chronology of Christ's life. The probability, however, is, that it follows the healing of the man in the synagogue on the sabbath-day, who "had his hand withered," and which is recorded in the paragraph that engaged our attention in the last "Section." Then, after He had performed this wonderful cure on the sabbath-day, "Then the Pharisees went out and held a council against him how they might destroy him," &c.

It is my intention to use this little fragment of Christ's life, and the remarks of His biography upon it, to illustrate the Glory of Gentleness. We shall leave the necessary verbal explanation to come out in the course of our observations upon the general subject. "The glory of gentleness!" Who, it may be said, ever heard of such a title, who ever heard of such a thing? The world sees glory in those who with a daring self-confident aim step into the most prominent and responsible positions of life, and play their part with a little tact and more parade. But glory in connexion with that meek and retiring man who does his rightful work in the

shade, shrinks from the noisy tongue of fame as from an un-heavenly sound—is a strange thing at present to our proud world. Still it is a reality. It is the only glory on earth of any worth or of any lasting duration. Let us look at this gentleness as it appeared in Christ, the Heavenly Teacher—the model man.

From this passage we infer in relation to this subject :—

I. THAT THE GENTLENESS OF CHRIST EXISTED IN THE PRESENCE OF HIS MOST MALIGNANT ENEMIES. The Pharisees, we are told, “held a council against him how they might destroy him,” “They were filled with madness,” says Luke. Their rage overbore their reason. They were frantic with indignation. Yet, notwithstanding this, Jesus was gentle. His breast was not perturbed by fear, nor shaken by the surges of revenge. He was not, of course, indifferent to life. The instinct of self-preservation lived and acted in Him as in all men. Indeed, the fact that He now withdrew from the presence of His infuriated enemies shows that He had that respect for His own preservation, which is common to our kind. “When Jesus knew it”—knew the indignation of His enemies, He retired to the quiet shores of Galilee—He withdrew Himself from thence. He “withdrew.” He did not, impelled by fear, flee from them. We never hear of Him, like some of the old saints, “fleeing from his enemies.” He peacefully retired, passed off with the calm majesty of an heroic soul. There is a species of gentleness that is serene amidst the friendly and propitious, but which rushes into turbulent excitement in the presence of the adverse. Such gentleness is but the storm sleeping in the stagnant air. True gentleness is that which can look calmly on the face of a frowning multitude, and maintain a quiet mastery over the passions amidst the most terrible events. Such was the gentleness of Christ ; and in such gentleness I see the highest grade of glory.

From this passage we infer :—

II. THAT THE GENTLENESS OF CHRIST WAS SUSTAINED AMIDST THE ACTIVITIES OF IMMENSE LABOR. “And great multitudes

followed him, and he healed them all," &c. Mark says, "A great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judea, and from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and from beyond Jordan ; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him. And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him because of the multitude, lest they should throng him. For he had healed many ; insomuch that they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues. And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God."

The shore of Galilee, whither He withdrew from the malignant Pharisees, teemed with men gathered from all districts of the country. The diseased among them He healed, the ignorant He taught. For His convenience He enters a little skiff, which, perhaps, was floating on the margin of the beach ; and from that skiff, as from a pulpit, He spoke to the vast multitudes that thronged the shore—spoke words which served to heal alike the diseases of the body and the mind. Here is labor amidst the most exciting scenes ; yet how gentle the Great Worker ! He is not elated by His popularity, He is not harassed by the multiplicity of engagements. There, amidst the stirring grandeur of nature and the still more exciting appearance of restless crowds of men, whose anxious eyes centring on Him, met His glance at every turn, He prosecutes His divine mission with all the ease of a moral master. This gentleness, which we ever see developed in Christ, in the midst of immense labor, is the gentleness with which I associate the idea of glory. There is a gentle mien and bearing—a certain ease and gracefulness of manner much approved in modern society as forming the "gentleman," which are often nothing more than a certain lackadaisical effeminacy. The ringed and delicate hands cannot labor. The slightest trials destroy its equanimity. The graceful ease is mechanical, not moral, measured by the laws of etiquette, not directed by the gentle motions of a heaven-attuned soul. It is but a miserable mockery of that



thing which men are made to admire, that which Christ embodied; namely, the gentleness of a great soul lifted above the mercenary and the servile, moving in conscious harmony with the universe, itself, and God.

From this passage we infer :—

III. THAT THE GENTLENESS OF CHRIST APPEARED IN THE UNOSTENTATIOUS AND TENDER MANNER IN WHICH HE PROSECUTED THE SUBLIMEST MISSION. “He shall not strive, nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets : a bruised reed shall he not break,” &c.

First : *Observe the mission in which He was engaged.* There are two expressions used here to designate it : “Show judgment unto the Gentiles,” and “Send forth judgment unto victory.” That is “until he make the cause of judgment and truth completely victorious.” What a work is this ! What revolutions does it involve ;—social, political, ecclesiastical and moral ! Enthroned rectitude in human institutions and human souls, and earth will bloom as paradise once more.\*

Secondly : *Observe the spirit with which He pursued it.* (1) *Unostentatiousness.* The whole life of Christ is marked by this. How unostentatiously He came at first into our world. No cannons roared, no bells pealed to announce His birth. He came in the quiet of morning, before the slumber of the world was broken, nor did His advent break its hush. One might have thought that His birth would have been announced by signals that would have startled the nations with awe. Few babes were ever born in more obscure circumstances—few babes, on entering life, awoke less sensation than He. His public ministry is marked by the same spirit. “He made himself of no reputation.” He appears not in the aspect of a sovereign, but in “the form of a servant.” He descends into the lower parts of the earth, mingles with the lowest grades of society, enters into the sorrows and the trials of the poorest of the poor. In His

\* See Homilist, vol. VI. p. 35.

sermons, there is none of the vociferation of the popular declaimer, none of the ornament of the ambitious orator. All is free and familiar. "His doctrines distil as the dew." Whether you see Him talking with the woman of Samaria, or sitting down with the promiscuous multitude on the mountain brow, or eating at the table of the publican, or entering for the last time the metropolis of His own country, you are struck with His modest and unostentatious bearing. He leaves the world in the same way. Instead of rousing its attention to His departure, He goes out early in the morning to the Mount of Olives while mankind are yet asleep, takes with Him His disciples, and after spreading His benevolent hands over them, and pronounces His last benediction, quietly leaves the world; leaves it until those ages pass which gracious Heaven has allowed for His redemptive work: and then He will come again, and "every eye shall see him." (2) *Tenderness*. "A bruised reed shall he not break and the smoking flax shall he not quench." A reed is in itself a frail plant: not like the ash or the oak, of firm and solid structure. But this is a *bruised* reed whose vitality has been checked and whose head bows to the earth. So tender, however, is Christ, that He will not injure this frail and delicate life. Nor will He "quench the smoking flax." The full flame of the lamp may stand before a strong gust of air, but as it flickers with exhausted oil and wick in its last stage, the softest breath will put it out. And so tender is Christ in His methods of redemptive agency, that He will not hasten the extinction of the dying flame. There are men in society, like the broken reed and the flickering lamp,—exceedingly frail. Some weak in circumstances, depressed by trials and privations; some weak in body—the springs of health have failed, and life is ebbing out; some weak in intellect, having neither the power nor the means to get broad and lofty views of truth; and some weak in piety—babes in Christ. But with all these the great Physician deals with the utmost tenderness. He will raise the "bruised reed," and give it strength to bear the scorching sun and the stormy wind. "He gathers the

lambs with his arm and carries them in his bosom, and gently leads those that are with young."

What a display of true gentleness you have here! Here is a Being engaged in the most momentous work, the work of showing "judgment unto the Gentiles," and bringing forth "judgment unto victory," who, instead of wearing some badge of earthly glory—and no badge, however magnificent, could adequately express the real greatness either of His being or mission—appears as the poorest of the poor. Instead of lifting His voice with the air of a hero or a sovereign, His voice is scarcely heard in the street. He does "not strive;" there is no display of violence in grappling with His foes. He does "not lift up his voice in the street" to gather and touch the souls of multitudes. He eschews all the miserable tricks of the candidate for popularity. Nor does He, on His triumphal march, haughtily pass by the frail and the tried—no: the "bruised reed he does not break, nor quench the smoking flax."

From this passage we infer:—

IV. THAT THE GENTLENESS OF CHRIST DEMONSTRATES HIS SPECIAL CONNEXION WITH GOD. His quietly withdrawing from the malignant Pharisees, retiring unostentatiously to the sea-side, and there with modesty, as distinguished as His love, doing good to the multitude that followed Him, and His charging them that "they should not make him known," reminded Matthew of what had been predicted of old concerning the specially chosen, beloved, and qualified servant of God—the model servant: "That it might be fulfilled that was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Behold my servant, whom I have chosen, my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment unto the Gentiles." This does not mean, of course, that Jesus worked thus in order to fulfil the prophecy, but that in acting so, this prophecy was so illustrated that it at once reminded Matthew of it. The fact that he does not quote it with verbal accuracy either from the Hebrew, or the Septuagint

version, shows that it was a passage in Matthew's memory which this gentleness of Christ most vividly recalled.

There is, perhaps, no greater proof of a man's close moral connexion with God, and of His divine mission and endowments, than true *gentleness* of soul. God is a "God of peace." The universe may be in the utmost commotion but it wakes no ripple on the Divine nature. He sits in sublime tranquillity "above the flood." All his operations are gentle. In the working of human machinery, the grating noise and the rattling din are often insufferable to the ear; but, how noiselessly works the stupendous and complicated mechanism of the great universe. Scarcely a sound is heard where God's hand is most manifest. He, who, in the moral domain, works most gently, works in closest contact and nearest sympathy with the GREAT ONE. The more removed from Him we are, the more turbulent in soul—the more blustering in action we become. The most noisy Church is the least divine, the most blustering members, the most vociferous preachers—though the most attractive for the hour, are the least in harmony with the ordinary operations of God. Noise is not power. It is the little shallow stream that you hear rattling among the hills: the deep rivers roll on in majestic calmness. It is not the exciting flash of lightning that melts the snowy mountains and clothes the earth with verdure—it is the gentle sunbeam. It is the little lamp kindled by man that flickers in every wind: the stars lit up by God burn steadily and brightly amidst the fiercest hurricane.

From this passage we infer:—

V. THAT THE GENTLENESS OF CHRIST WILL ONE DAY WIN THE CONFIDENCE OF THE WORLD. "In his name shall the Gentiles trust;" or, as paraphrased by Doddridge, this gentle and gracious administration shall cheer mankind in so sensible and irresistible a manner that *the Gentiles shall confide in His illustrious name.*

Three remarks may serve to illustrate this remarkable passage:—First: *That man is essentially a trusting being.*

Like all creatures he is dependent, and this dependence he is made to feel every day. He has wants which require supplies from without ; he has affections which require repose in something without. As the ivy twines around the oak, the human affections twine around some outward object. Every man's soul has an object of chief love and reliance. Some trust in one thing and some in another—some in gold, some in “chariots and some in horses :”—all trust. Secondly : *Man's condition is evermore determined by the character of the objects in which he confides.* He who places implicit reliance upon objects incapable of meeting the instincts and exigencies of his being—the false, the unworthy, and the frail, must inevitably suffer. Thirdly : *The name of Christ is the only object of trust that can secure man's well-being.* His name is Himself. He is supremely worthy of trust. His character commends itself to man's highest admiration. He is an *adequate* object of trust ; His wisdom can guide in every perplexity ; His power supply every want. He is a *lasting* object of trust. “The mountains shall depart and the hills be removed,” but “he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.” Fourthly : *The gentleness of Christ is adapted to win the world to a confidence in His name.* Gentleness is *love*. Selfishness and malevolence are never gentle, they are turbulent and clamorous ; but love is gentle and ever winning—it is the magnet of the soul. Gentleness is *holiness*. Sin is never gentle ; it heaves the soul like a troubled sea ; but rectitude is ever gentle and ever attractive ; men are made to admire the righteous. Gentleness is *moral majesty*. It is the state of a soul raised above fear and sin, sitting down as it were at the right hand of God ; and this moral majesty has ever a power to fascinate and win the heart.

Brother, it is only as we represent the gentleness of Christ that we shall draw the world to Him. The Church has too often been the scene of arrogance and clamor. We have had the harsh tones of the bigot, the pompous jargon of the blustering dogmatist, and the wild raving of the ignorant



declaimer ; but how little of the gentleness of Him, who, when on earth, “did not strive or cause his voice to be heard in the street”—who does not break the “bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax.” Once, in the ages that are gone, “a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind ; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake ; and after the earthquake, a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire ; and after the fire a still small voice ;” and it was in this still small voice that the word of the Lord was conveyed. “The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation.”

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## Germs of Thought.

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SUBJECT :—*Form of Godliness.*

“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.”—2 Tim. iii. 5.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Sixty-sixth.

It is not often that the Church of Christ is in a state of undisturbed prosperity. Its atmosphere is seldom free from clouds. Its cup of pleasure generally contains some present evil or future danger threatening to disturb its peace and to awaken its fears. Its greatest troubles and difficulties generally arise from the feelings, sentiments, and practices of its own members. The apostle Paul had often to warn and reprove inconsistent characters. The holy apostle not only wept over the inconsistencies of Christians in his own days, but looked with a prophetic eye into the future, and saw unmistakeable signs of a dark and dangerous apostacy looming in

the distance. In this chapter, he informs his friend Timothy of the coming danger. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come." Times in which men professing the name of Christ will be notoriously selfish, unbearably proud, basely ungrateful, and wholly addicted to low and sensual pleasures: "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away." This passage of Scripture applies to those people who have all their religion in their creed—people whose theology may be very orthodox, but whose hearts are very wrong;—"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof."

By the word "*godliness*" we understand true religion in all its parts: love in the heart, light in the intellect, and obedience in the action. This expression occurs only a few times in the Holy Scriptures, and in each case it implies true piety resulting from the knowledge and love of the Saviour. By the word "*form*" we understand "that by which anything is recognised—its outward and visible aspect." Paul speaks of "a form of knowledge," Rom. ii. 20—a "form of doctrine," Rom. vi. 17—a "form of sound words," 2 Tim. i. 13, and a "form of godliness."

The words before us suggest the following thoughts:—  
First: *That there is such a thing as a form of godliness.*  
Secondly: *That a form of godliness may exist without its vital power.* Thirdly: *That the possession of a mere form of godliness does not entitle a person to Christian fellowship.*

I. THAT THERE IS SUCH A THING AS A FORM OF GODLINESS. "Having a form of godliness." We shall not offer any remarks on the various "forms" which are now in use in the Christian Church. Our text says nothing either in favor of, or against, form—but merely states a fact, that some men who profess religion have its form without its vital power. There is nothing wrong in the form of a thing providing the thing itself be good. The form of godliness cannot, therefore, be wrong or injurious. First: *It is natural.* Form is one of the expres-

sions of life—"it is its outward and visible aspect." Everything that has life assumes a form. The flower in the garden, the grass on the meadow, the tree in the forest—all assume their own peculiar form. The animal creation has its thousand forms:—all these forms greatly vary, from the frail form of the tiny insect to that of the great king of the forest. The world of mind has its myriad forms, by which it instructs, and charms, and blesses mankind. Spiritual life within the soul—man's highest life, assumes a variety of forms. It manifests itself in the form of devotion, of penitential sorrow, of private and public prayer, and of careful attendance on religious ordinances. It is by means of form that the "new creature" breathes and acts, and manifests itself. What are our devotional meetings, our sacred ordinances, and all our religious exercises but the forms or outward aspects of true godliness?

Some people entertain a very high opinion of certain forms of prayer—others strongly object to everything of the kind. Now, what is prayer? Is it not an expression of spiritual life? Is it not the language of the heart, crying to God for a certain blessing? This heart-language is generally expressed in words. These words may be arranged by the suppliant himself, or by another. They are the form or external aspect by which the feelings of the heart are discovered. These feelings are generally better expressed in our own words—but sometimes they may flow more easily in the words of another. Secondly: *It is beautiful*. The sacred historian tells us, that when God created the heavens and the earth, "the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep." It was an unseemly disorderly chaos, until the All-wise beautifully arranged the confused elements. But when He gave form and position to each element, the world presented a very different aspect. "And God saw that it was good." There is still a great amount of goodness and beauty in the material world. Every person of mind and refined feeling is pleased and edified in witnessing the myriad forms of both the

vegetable and animal creations. There is beauty also in the religious world. The forms of godliness as they appear in the Christian family, in the social meeting, and in the public sanctuary, are exquisitely beautiful. Thirdly: *It is advantageous.* What is both natural and beautiful must be of some benefit. The form of godliness is beneficial to the Christian himself: it is a vehicle of instruction, light, and Divine influence. Some people say they conscientiously object to *forms* of religion. This may be very true. Neither do we like a *compulsory* form, or a form which is not the natural expression of the inner man. But we love the varied forms of godliness, as they are the only channels which convey to our minds much joy and comfort. They are also advantageous to others. They are both evidences of spiritual life and means of spiritual improvement.

II. THAT A FORM OF GODLINESS MAY EXIST WITHOUT ITS VITAL POWER. "But denying the power thereof." First: *This is possible.* Nature presents us with many an affecting illustration of this point. The flower in your garden may, for a time, retain the form when life is extinct. The ancient oak in the forest may for years stand erect, be covered with bark and graced with branches, when all the signs of life have passed away. The little shell on yonder beach may attract your notice when its once living tenant can no where be found. Thus, the form of godliness may exist when all its life and vigor have passed away. The Church at Laodicea furnishes a melancholy proof of this statement. That Church wanted nothing in form—but knew not that it was "wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Secondly: *This is a lamentable fact.* The possession of a mere form of religion is not only a possible thing, but a thing of daily occurrence. Ah! how many grasp the withered flower, play with the worthless shell, and put their trust in a "broken reed." Many individuals go through a routine of religious duties without a spark of religion in their hearts. They have the form of godliness, but not its power. Persons

under the influence of mere feelings join the Church, sit at the Lord's table, erect a family altar, and attend to other religious duties. But ere long these feelings, like the "morning dew," pass away, or become dormant ; yet, from the force of habit, or for the sake of appearance, or to calm an accusing conscience they attend to these forms. But there is neither warmth, nor life, nor power in their religious exercises. Thirdly : *This fact has most alarming consequences.* When a man becomes satisfied with a mere form of religion the result will be truly sad. (1) *There will be no searchings of heart.* The formalist is a stranger to himself—he never looks into his own heart, his eye is never fixed on the springs of his actions, the motives of his soul. Whilst at home with his forms he is an utter stranger to his heart. (2) *There will be no pungent sorrow for sin.* Sin has its seat in the heart, and as long as a man remains ignorant of the real state of his heart he never sheds the bitter tear of repentance. Take, as an illustration, the prayer of the Pharisee in the temple. How dry, how void of feeling—how destitute of life was that carefully-worded and eloquent prayer. There was no sorrow for sin there—no trembling before God—no tears of repentance. He attended strictly to the *form*, and returned into his house unblessed. (3) *There will be no love to truth.* The man may love his prayer-book, or a certain *mode* of religious worship ; but his heart throbs not with Heaven's love, there is a death-like coldness in his bosom, and his very prayers freeze on his lips. The flame of heaven-born love is extinguished—the soul is wrapt in gloom, and the spirit puts on, instead of Christ's righteousness, "the form of godliness." (4) *There will be no conformity to the Divine will.* It is the "power" of godliness that assimilates man to his Maker, and not the mere form of religion. The formalist denies the power of godliness. He says,—“I am a religious man, I pay the strict attention to the forms of my Church,—I love Him who first loved me,” but his whole life is a practical denial of this assertion. The stream of his religion



risks no higher than the narrow channels of his forms—his life is as dry and barren as David wished mount Gilboa to be. It is true that religion has power, and a very great power. It has power over the whole man; it changes his views, and feelings, and purposes. It has power to subdue prejudice, disarm rebellion, to destroy immoral habits, and to mould and influence life. But the formalist says, No. “He denies the power thereof.”

III. THAT THE POSSESSION OF A MERE FORM OF GODLINESS DOES NOT ENTITLE A PERSON TO CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP. “From such turn away.” Have no religious intercourse with him.—2 Cor. vi. 17. A true Christian Church consists of changed men, of men who know themselves, repent of their sins, love the truth, exercise faith in Christ, and are anxious in all things to conform to the will of God. The formalist is not suitable for such a fellowship—he cannot hold communion with such individuals. First: *He has no sympathy with their sentiments.* His very presence would create a discord in the sweet music of their spirits. The sentiments which preside over their enlightened souls are love to God, hatred of sin, and a holy pleasure in doing good. With such sentiments as these the formalist has no sympathy whatever. Secondly: *He would detract from their usefulness.* It would be no real loss to the Christian Church if all its formal members were to withdraw from its communion at once. They are no real blessings—but rather Achans in its camp. By their lukewarmness, pride, and worldly-mindedness they inflict a sad injury on the spiritual body of Christ. The “barren fig-tree” in the Lord’s vineyard, injuriously affects the living and fruit-bearing plants. Thirdly: *He is unfit for any exalted pleasures.* He knows nothing of soul-communion with the Invisible. He cannot appreciate those living streams which “make glad the City of God.” He is not prepared for the exalted worship and pure joys of Heaven. The possession of a mere “form” gives him no title to the white robe, the golden harp, and the bright mansions of eternal bliss.

Now, in conclusion, we may observe that the existence of mere formalists in the Church is no argument against religion. The withered form of that old lifeless tree does not prove that all the trees in the forest are destitute of life and beauty. If the formalist has only "a form," there are thousands who possess and feel "the power, of godliness." As we are blessed with the forms of religion—the channels of holy influences, O let us pray earnestly and perseveringly for a copious effusion of the living Spirit.

*Horsley-on-Tyne.*

J. H. HUGHES.

SUBJECT:—*Law and Faith Divine Moral Forces.*

"But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a school-master. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."  
—Gal. iii. 25, 26.

*Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Sixty-seventh.*

FROM this passage I infer:—

I. THAT THERE ARE TWO GREAT DIVINE MORAL FORCES IN OUR WORLD. Here called "law" and "faith." Both these forces have two distinct forms of existence; the form of an external system, and the form of an internal power.

First: *They have the form of an external system.* The one appears in Judaism, and the other in Christianity. The "law" often means, and perhaps here, Judaism with all its moral principles and positive institutions. Judaism is the embodiment of inflexible and rigorous law. "Faith" often means, and perhaps it means here, Christianity. Christianity is worthy of faith, requires faith, demands faith, awakens, strengthens, and perfects, faith. We have both in this Book.

Secondly: *They have the form of an internal power.* There is a legal feeling in the soul, a restraining servile feeling, and

there is the evangelical trusting feeling, free, filial, and joyous. Minds under the dominion of the legal force act in all things from the notion of duty, and the idea of duty they get from the written precept. They are morally under law ; —punctilious and formal. How much Judaism is there now in the Church under the garb of Christianity ?

II. THAT ONE OF THESE FORCES ALWAYS PRECEDES THE EXISTENCE OF THE OTHER. “After that faith is come,” &c.

First : *Law as a system existed before faith.* Law was in the world for fifteen centuries before faith came. Paul says, that the law acted as a “schoolmaster.” The word schoolmaster Paul does not use in the sense in which we use it,—as a teacher. The ancient pedagogue or schoolmaster amongst the Greeks and Romans (for be it observed Paul was writing to a Gentile church) was a mere servant employed to take care of children ; to restrain and guard, not to instruct. This ancient pedagogue, probably amongst other duties, very often took the little ones by the hand to the school, and delivered them up to the chosen teacher. Paul probably means to say, that this law, under the form of Judaism, acted thus in relation to man anterior to Christianity. It watched over humanity as the pedagogue watched over the child which was incapable of taking care of itself. The Jewish law was but the pedagogue which the Great Father sent forth to guide His human offspring, on the long and devious path of ages, up to the school of Gospel times.

Secondly : *Law as a principle in the human soul exists before faith.* This legal feeling, like the pedagogue, generally takes charge of the soul in its first stages—treats it as a child incapable of taking care of itself—puts its hand upon its speculative intellect and its impetuous impulses. The soul in its first stages, if it avoids the outward commission of wrong, or performs outwardly the right, does so from dread of suffering, rather than the love of virtue. Do you see in children or in men, outward morality where Christianity is not?—

it arises from the restraints and guardianship of this pedagogue—this legal feeling. Destroy this pedagogue, this legal feeling, and the passions will run riot, the soul will revel in crime and grow fiendish. Thank God for this legal feeling, this pedagogue, where Christianity is not : society without it would be scarcely tolerable, or even possible.

III. THAT THE ADVENT OF THE LATTER OF THESE FORCES FREES FROM THE DOMINION OF THE FORMER. “After faith is come we are *no longer* under a schoolmaster.”

First : *That this is true of these forces as systems in the world.* Judaism had a right to exist for fifteen centuries until Christianity came ; but when faith came it lost its right to continue. When Christ upon the cross said, “It is finished,” the knell of Judaism tolled through the universe. It had no longer any right to treat the Church as the pedagogue treats the child.

Secondly : *This is true of these forces as principles in the soul.* When faith enters the soul, the legal feeling is banished. It is the dawn of a new era in the heart. Duty is attended to, not because of outward commands, but because of inward desires ;—“the law is written on the heart.” Up to this point the man did whatever he did that was outwardly good, because it was written in the commandment. If it had not been written so and so, he would not have done so and so. He has lived and acted in the letter and by the letter. Erase the letter and you change his conduct. But when evangelical faith has come, annul the commandment, blot out the letter of all laws, and there will still be obedience :—the soul says, “My meat and my drink are to do the will,” &c. In benevolent subscriptions the soul does not enter into arithmetical calculation as to what precise sum shall be given, but says, “Were the whole realm of nature mine,” &c., &c. In studying the scriptures it does not say, How many chapters or verses shall I daily read ? but “My delight is in the law of the Lord,” &c. In attendance upon public worship it does not ask, Is it right for me to go once or twice on the

Lord's-day? but, "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go unto the house of the Lord." "One thing have I desired of the Lord," &c.

But how does this faith free the soul from the dominion of this legal feeling—this pedagogue? The text answers the question.

IV. THAT THE ADVENT OF THE LATTER OF THESE FORCES FREES THE SOUL FROM THE DOMINION OF THE FORMER BY AFFILIATING IT TO GOD. "Ye are all the children of God," &c. What is it to be a child of God in the spiritual sense? It is something more than to be His offspring; for we are all His offspring, emanations from His eternal nature. It is something more than the possession of a natural resemblance to Him. The spirituality, reason, conscience, and freedom which belong to God, all moral creatures have, to some extent in common with ourselves.

It means the possession of the *true filial spirit*. The spirit of adoption by which we cry "Abba Father;" the spirit of reverence, love, adoration, cheerful trust, boundless confidence. It is obvious how this filial spirit banishes the legal feeling. "We have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear," &c. Does a loving devoted child require a code of laws to induce him to act rightly in relation to his parent? No more does the soul inspired with the filial feeling, require law to induce him to act rightly towards God:—love is the royal law of his heart. Does an affectionate and devoted brother, whose heart is penetrated with, and pervaded by, the fraternal element, require a code of laws to induce him to act rightly towards his brother or his sister? No more does the true Christian, who is penetrated by the right feeling, require a code of laws to induce him to act rightly toward his race. Wherefore then serveth the law?—you ask. "It was added because of transgression."

Now the text states, that *faith in Christ* produces this affiliation. "Ye are all the children of God, *by faith in Christ Jesus*." Not by faith in the facts of history, or in the



discoveries of science, or in the doctrines of philosophy—no, *but faith in Christ*. It is Christ that reveals to us the Fatherhood of God ; reveals His unequalled excellency ; His disinterested love ; and His wonderful compassion. It is, in one word, by faith in Christ, that we become possessed of the filial feeling to call Him Father, and that He condescends to acknowledge us His children.

We learn from this subject :—

First: *The test of true Christianity*. What is the text? Freedom, elasticity, joyousness and benevolence of soul. Technicality, punctiliousness, formality, gloom, polemics, wherever seen in individuals or churches, are evidences to me that the soul is under the influence of the pedagogue, not of love to the Infinite Father ; are proofs that faith has not come to the soul. All these are the miserable remnants of Judaism, not the free and flowing robes of Christianity.

Secondly: *The necessity of true Christianity*. Would you have a free and joyous soul, my brother? Would you rise superior to law? superior to its prescriptions and sanctions, its penalties and rewards? Would you rejoice in God as your Father and move through the universe as your property and your home?—then faith must come to you. You must know the truth before you can be free.

“He is the freeman whom the truth makes free ;  
And all are slaves beside.”

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SUBJECT :—*The End better than the Beginning*.

“Better is the end of a thing than the beginning.”—Eccles. vii. 8.

Analysis of Hovily the Two Hundred and Sixty-eighth.

THIS is a strange statement, and thoroughly false when applied to some things. First: *It is false when applied to sin*. Sin is better—if the word better can be applied to that which is essentially bad—in its beginning than in its end.

Sin to man, in its first stages, is a comparatively pleasant thing. The fruit to Eve was delicious ; the thirty pieces of silver in the hands of Judas, at first, were prized : but the end—how sad ! “ Lust, when it has conceived, bringing forth sin : sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” Sin begins in pleasure but ends in pain ; begins in music but ends in groans. The days of a sinner’s childhood are often bright and genial ; he often excites high hopes in the bosom of fond parents ; his tutors predict great things from his genial tendencies and fine talents : but as he yields to pleasure, silences the voice of conscience, follows the desires of the flesh, his heart grows obdurate, his habits are confirmed, age comes on, and he dies, without repentance and without hope. Secondly : *It is false when applied to unwise enterprises.* The first stages of a mercantile or a national enterprise to the projector who believes in its importance and feasibility are interesting and pleasant. The soul is interested, its energies are brought into full play, and its hope soars high. But if the methods of action are unwise, the enterprise will soon prove to be a house built upon the sand, which must totter and fall before the storm. The end of all unwise plans is worse than the beginning. Thirdly : *It will not apply to partial reformations.* A thoughtless sinner is aroused to a sense of his sin and danger. He resolves on reformation, he renounces his old practices, he severs himself from his old associates, he feels himself impressed with the truths of religion, he joins himself to the faithful. For a time he has pleasure in the change, so far as it goes. But the reformation has not been effected by right principles, but there comes an apostacy. Certain devils, in the form of habits, have been expelled, but the mind is left empty. No great truths fill up its sympathies or engage its attention ; the consequence is, the evil spirit at length, returns, bringing with him seven more devils ; “and the last state of that man is worse than the first.”

But whilst the words will not apply to these things, there are some things to which they will apply. First : *They will*

*apply to an honest and a perseveringly search after truth.* At the outset of all investigations, the mind is often tasked with the arbitrary, harassed with doubt, and perplexed with difficulties ; but as it proceeds, things appear more reasonable, obstacles are removed, and the mist gradually rolls off the scene. The mind, in commencing its quest for truth, is like a traveller in a strange land in the dim dawn of morning. Every object is indistinct : step by step he moves amidst all the anxieties of doubt on his untrodden path ; but as he advances the light increases, the horizon expands ; at length the sun strikes the meridian, he reaches an eminence from which he can look backward and onward, from which he can see things in all their distinctness, realise their proportions and beauty :—his end is better than his beginning. Secondly : *They will apply to the history of Christianity.* Its beginning was, to all appearance, bad. It came from despised Nazareth ; its founder was the son of a carpenter, who died as a malefactor ; its first preachers were humble fishermen. Systems, institutions, kings and peoples, civilized and savage were against it. “ It was despised and rejected of men.” But its end will be better—its path is becoming clearer and clearer every day ; it is fast moving on to universal dominion ; it will one day be the empress of the world. The little stone shall grow into a mountain. “ Christ shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.” Thirdly : *They will apply to true friendships.* Most true friendships at their outset have trials. Misunderstandings shaking confidence, wounding love, and giving rise to painful suspicions, are not uncommon at the commencement of true friendship. But as it proceeds, mutual knowledge, mutual excellence, mutual love increase, and the twain become one. Fourthly : *They will apply to the life of a good man.* To this, we think, Solomon particularly refers. “ Better is the day of one’s death than the day of one’s birth,” he says. Birth and death ! What words, what events are these ! The one is the medium of admission to this world, the other the medium of dismissal from it. Our world is a great

thoroughfare of souls. Through birth, thousands come fresh from the Eternal Mind every day, and through death thousands pass away. There is an analogy between these two events—birth and death: (1) Both introduce to a new mode of existence. The change of the mode of existence which occurs when we first come into this world is not greater than the change which death will effect. (2) Both introduce into a sphere for which there has been an antecedent preparation. The child has organs fitted to this planet. It is made for it. The elements, laws, and provisions are suited to its organization. So it is with death. Death introduces the soul into a state for which it is fitted by this world—some have characters morally organized for hell—some for heaven.

Now, the statement, that the end of life is better than the beginning, is not in accordance with the general sentiments of mankind. The birth-day is generally considered to be a season of gratitude and joy; and death, whether it occur in the spring-time of youth, or the decrepitude of age, is a season of sorrow and mourning. Humanity enters the world with joy, and leaves it amidst tears.

That the end of a good man's life is better than the beginning, I shall further illustrate by three remarks:—

I. AT THE END OF HIS LIFE HE IS INTRODUCED INTO A BETTER STATE. First: *He begins his life amidst impurity.* The first air he breathes, the first word he hears, the first impression he receives, are tainted with sin; but at its end, he is introduced to purity,—saints,—angels,—Christ,—God! Secondly: *He begins his life on trial.* It is a moral battle,—shall he conquer? It is a race,—shall he win? It is a voyage,—shall he reach the haven? The end determines all. Thirdly: *He begins his life amidst suffering.* "Man is born to trouble." "In this tabernacle we groan, earnestly," &c. If the parent knew how much the child would have to suffer during his life, would he rejoice at his birth?

II. AT THE END OF HIS LIFE HE IS INTRODUCED INTO BETTER OCCUPATIONS. Our occupations here are, threefold—*physical, intellectual, moral*. All these are more or less of a painful kind. In the first, we are toiling for bread—in the second, grappling in the dark with the mere rudiments of knowledge—in the third, we are mortifying “the flesh with its corruptions and lusts.” But in the state into which death introduces us, the engagements will be congenial to the tastes, invigorating to the frame, delightful to the soul, and honoring to God.

III. AT THE END OF HIS LIFE HE IS INTRODUCED INTO BETTER SOCIETY. We are made for society. But society here is frequently *insincere, non-intelligent, unaffectionate*. There is much to pain in its hypocrisies, in its ignorance, in its cold-heartedness. But how delightful the society into which death will introduce us! We shall mingle with enlightened, genuine, warm-hearted souls, rising in teeming numbers, grade above grade, up to the Eternal God Himself.

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SUBJECT :—*The History of Human Wickedness.*

“Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden? Which were cut down out of time, whose foundation was overflowed with a flood: Which said unto God, Depart from us: and what can the Almighty do for them?”—Job xxii. 15-17.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Sixty-ninth.

THE subject of these words is the history of human wickedness, and they present us with several facts in relation to this subject,

I. THAT THE HISTORY OF WICKEDNESS IS VERY ANCIENT IN ITS DATE. Eliphaz spoke these words three thousand years ago, and at that far distant period he calls wickedness the “old way.” But though ancient, it is not eternal. The character of



God, the teaching of the Bible, and the dictates of conscience show that sin is an apostacy, an alienation from God, an anomaly in the universe. There was a period when not a single shadow of error darkened a single intellect, when not an impure feeling heaved in a single breast, when not a discordant note disturbed the harmonies of the creation. Sin, then, though old, had a beginning. But when did the first rebellious thought arise? When did the first spirit raise itself in opposition to God? We cannot answer this question. We know, however, that it existed in the universe anterior to the existence of man. It prowled about the creation when Eden was in its bloom and man in his perfection. It was imported from some other world to this. It came through Adam. "As by one man sin entered the world," &c." Surely we cannot boast of our genealogy; birth is the last thing of which we ought to be proud; we have no spotless ancestry. "Our fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." Sin is almost as old as humanity. In looking over the past we discover no golden age. It would have been interesting to have found in our history one pure generation, to have marked how many conducted themselves toward each other, and all towards God; but we are not thus favored. All the generations that have passed this earth have trodden in "the old way" of sin; only one pure man has appeared perfect and has retained his perfection to the last,—*"The Man Christ Jesus."*

II. THAT THE HISTORY OF WICKEDNESS IS LEGIBLE IN ITS REVELATION. "Hast thou marked the old way?" &c. This history is like the roll seen in a vision by Ezekiel; "it is written within and without."

First: *It is written within.* You can read it on the tablets of the soul, you can read it in the deadness of the intellect, the dormancy of the conscience, the pollution of the imagination, the disorder of the affections, the perversion of the will. The soul is a vineyard laid waste, a temple in ruins, an empire in anarchy, a world in chaos.

Secondly: *It is written without.* Do you not see marks of wickedness without? Can you not see them in material nature? The yawning earthquake, the withering pestilence, and the blighting famine—are these not indications of wickedness? Can you not see them in society? The chicanery of commerce, the feuds of families, the wars of nations, the distresses of the poor, the groans of the oppressed, the sighs of the bereaved, the moans of the dying, the graves of the dead; what are these? I hear the notes of sin in every human sound, I find its footprints in every human path.

### III. THAT THE HISTORY OF WICKEDNESS DEVELOPS DIVINE RETRIBUTION AND PRACTICAL ATHEISM.

First: *It develops retribution.* “Whose foundation was overflowed with a flood.” The reference here is to the deluge. Who that has read the narrative that contains this catastrophe has not quailed with horror at the scene? Husbands and wives, parents and children, a whole generation swept off the probationary stage by the Almighty arm of long insulted Justice. But this deluge is but one of many examples of God’s retribution of sin. There was the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah; there was the engulfment of Pharaoh and his host; the extermination of the Canaanites; and the ruin of Jerusalem. These judgments are but *proofs* and *symbols* of the punishment that must ever follow sin. They are but examples and figures of the real thing. The deluge is but a figure of the moral storm that beats upon a guilty soul; the fire that descended upon Sodom is but a figure of the fires of a guilty conscience; the waters that engulfed Pharaoh and his host are but figures of the sea of horrid emotions that will one day roll its stormy billows over the guilty heart. These are but examples to warn us that there is justice in the universe. Shall we not, as voyagers on the sea of life, mark well these red beacons which flash on those rocks, on which past generations have struck and sunk? Or, shall we roll carelessly on with their red light gleaming on the wave?

Secondly: *It develops practical atheism.* "Which said unto God, Depart from us." This is the philosophy of sin. The practical realization of God is the foundation of all creature virtue. The idea of God is the central sun of the holy soul? it attracts all her faculties to itself, gives them light and life, and maintains them all in harmony. It was when Eve lost her confidence in God that she fell. "Yea, hath God said," &c.

IV. THAT THE HISTORY OF WICKEDNESS DEMANDS THE STUDY OF MAN. This is implied in the question of Eliphaz. "Hast thou marked the old way?" Why should it be studied? First: *Because it teaches the vastness of man's power.* All the forces of nature, all the laws and operations of God, all the teachings of the Bible, all the strivings of the Spirit, are against sin. Yet man sins. Here is power. It is not uncommon for theologians to represent man as having no power to believe, no power to repent; and yet, for six thousand years he develops his power in resisting God. Secondly: *It shows the greatness of God's patience.* God's character is opposed to sin;—it is a thing He hates. His arm is mighty enough to crush the rebels;—He could annihilate the globe by one volition and would experience no loss. Nor is there any just reason to prevent this. His justice would sanction, and the universe approve it: and yet he forbears. How great is His patience! "His thoughts are not as our thoughts," &c. Thirdly: *The energy of human influence.* If we want to estimate the influence we are capable of exerting, let us remember that one sinner has spread his influence through all ages, that the one sin of Adam has vibrated through the hearts of all men. Fourthly: *The magnitude of Christ's work.* What is Christ's work? To "finish transgression and make an end of sin;" "to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." What a work is this? To stem the torrent of human depravity, swollen by the confluent streams of ages; to uproot the seeds of evil, embedded deep in the heart of humanity; to dethrone the principalities and

powers of darkness, which have long held a master-sway over the race; to restore this ruined world to happiness; this revolted province to allegiance; this—this is His work, and what a work! We wonder not that He was overwhelmed in Gethsemane. His great intellect then gauged the dimensions of human crime, and His tender heart felt it pressing on its exquisite sensibilities. “He marked the old path of wickedness” that night, saw its every traveller moving towards the awful precipice. Fifthly : *It shows that salvation must be of God.* What can rescue humanity from the “old path?” God, and *He alone.*

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SUBJECT:—*Phases of Man's External Universe.*

“Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”—2 Peter, iii, 3-13.

## Introduction.

THE highest study of man is God, and He can only be studied through His manifestations—His word. His word is the centre and circumference of all known truth. Its principles should be the guide, and its spirit, the life of intelligent creatures. By His word, we do not mean merely the Bible, but all revelation of Himself. Nature, history, and the soul, are His word. “Day unto day uttereth speech,” &c. In speaking of God’s word we should always remember three things:—

First: *That His word is always a faithful representation of Himself.* Human words are often either masks to conceal, or false witnesses to misrepresent, the mind. But God’s words, whether written on matter or mind, in the forms and laws of life, or in literary characters, are always the faithful exponents of His own mind.

Secondly: *That His word is the expression of the highest intelligence and excellence.* The vast majority of human words have but little meaning, they express little or nothing. When they are even true to the thought and feeling of the speaker, the mind expressed is so inane, or so depraved, as to render them worse than useless. When a mind of superior energy, virtue, and spirit speaks, its utterance deserves attention. The words of such are amongst the chief blessings of society. They often live and work long after the tongue that spoke them, and the hand that inscribed them, has mouldered to dust. How valuable then must the Word of the Infinite God be, revealing as it does a mind all life, purity, and power!

Thirdly: *That His word is mighty and ever-operative.* A word is the mind acting, and the extent of its sphere is measured by its native force. The words of the best and strongest men do not accomplish half what they are intended to effect. They often fall powerless, and rebound upon the ear of the speaker without execution. But God’s word is force, vital and ever-active force. “He speaks and it is done.” His word, the text tells us, built, sustains, and one day will destroy, in some



sense, this material universe. It is a subtle and all-penetrating force, "sharper than any two-edged sword dividing," &c.

The passage before us speaks of two revelations from God: the "written promise," which was spoken through "prophets and apostles," and the Divine Word by which the "heavens were of old:" &c. That is, the Bible and Nature. That Nature is a revelation of God is a matter of universal feeling. Though true logic will deepen the conviction, it is nevertheless independent of all reasoning. It is not so with the Bible. The feeling that it is the word of God is conveyed to the soul through the medium of evidence. It passes through the understanding to the heart; and when it truly gets to the heart it is an inner witness whose testimony no hostile logic can silence. Inasmuch as the getting the conviction that the Bible is a revelation of God, requires more effort than to get the conviction that nature is, we find most men with the one and but few with the other. Nay, more, we find some men using the facts, or rather the appearances, of the one to contradict the Divinity of the other. This was the case with the "scoffers" spoken of in these verses. The passage gives us some interesting and instructive views of man's external universe. It enables us to look at it, as viewed by the scoffing sceptic, as regarded by the thoughtful Christian, as sustained for a moral purpose, as awaiting a tremendous crisis, and as assuming a renovated form.

We say man's external universe; for the heavens and the earth must undoubtedly be taken with that limitation. It is simply that district of material nature with which man is specially connected: the earth and its atmosphere,—our heavens. Though this part of the creation is great to us, it is but as a leaf in the forest of the universe.

As each of these aspects of man's external universe will be sufficient for a discourse, we shall give them as analyses of separate Homilies.

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SUBJECT:—*Man's External Universe as read by the Scoffing Sceptic.*

"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."—(*verses 3-5.*)

*Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Seventieth.*

THESE words give us an illustration of the way in which sceptics treat material nature.

I. THEY GET FROM IT A ONE-SIDED IDEA. The idea they obtain from the observation of nature was, that it was *unchanging*. "Since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue," &c. This is only partially true. It is true that a marvellous regularity characterizes the operations of nature,—that she seldom seems to step beyond her wonted path, and that she is seldom out of time. We thank God for this constancy. Without it the farmer would have no motive to cultivate his field, the mariner no chart to guide him over the deep, the philosopher no data on which to prosecute his enquiries or to build up his science. All would be confusion. Man, without plan, and without hope, would move under the wild impulses which the casualties of the moment awakened. Still, this is only *one side* of nature. Nature has her changes. What are miracles? What are many of the phenomena, which from time to time appear, and which, to the most scientific, seem out of the ordinary course of things? Nay, amidst all this constancy are there not incessant revolutions? Does not the inorganic change in its appearance? Old mountains, rivers, islands disappear, and new ones emerge. The vegetable and animal worlds succeed each other. All things *do not* continue as they were from the beginning. Nay, perhaps there is nothing the same—all things change. As there is immense multiplicity in the

unity of nature, so is there immense revolution in its constancy. A one-sided view of a many-sided thing is evermore erroneous.

Another instance of an improper reading is :—

II. THEY APPLY THIS ONE-SIDED IDEA AGAINST THE WRITTEN WORD. “Where is the promise of His coming?” As if they had said, The Scriptures reveal the final advent of Christ as a Judge, and the end of the world ; but this implies tremendous changes, and nature changes not ; and therefore the Scriptures are false. This was evidently the thought.

Now, has not the sceptic always read nature in this way ? Whether he has looked at its astronomical, geological, or physiological phases, has he not always so read it as to get some false idea of it, in order to turn it against the Bible ?

Another instance of an improper reading is :—

III. THEY DO THIS FROM A SAD PERVERSITY OF HEART. Where is the explanation of this wrong reading ?—in the Volume or in the readers ? Not in the Volume :—the Volume records changes in every verse. The constancy of nature is the constancy of change. The explanation is to be found in the readers. Who are they ? They are “scoffers walking after their own lusts and willingly ignorant.”

First : *They were “willingly ignorant.”* Their ignorance was not for the want of capacity or means ; but for the want of disposition. They would not read correctly—they would not get correct ideas. “They love darkness,” &c. Light streams about them in all directions but they shut their eyes. The voice of wisdom crieth everywhere but they close their ears.

Secondly : *They were “willingly ignorant” because of the state of their hearts.* They had a scoffing and lustful soul. The scoffer cannot be a learner : the heart polluted with lusts cannot see God. Jude gives you a full description of this class, (v. 16), and so does Peter in the preceding chapter, verse 10—20.

In this scoffing soul which ridicules the most sacred things, and this lustful heart filled with the heat and smoke of its passions, you have the source of all infidelity. Men are atheists because they do not *like* to retain God in their thoughts. Infidelity has its roots where no logic can reach.

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SUBJECT :—*Man's External Universe as regarded by the Thoughtful Christian.*

“By the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water : whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished : but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.”  
—(*verses 5-7.*)

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Seventy-first.

PETER, here, seems to look upon material nature as a development of the WORLD. In nature, he saw the Divine idea embodied—the Divine will in action. Nature, in all her phases and operations, seemed to him as God speaking.

What is the Christian's view of nature ? The answer we get from this passage is :—

I. HE REGARDS IT AS ORIGINALLY PRODUCED BY THE DIVINE WORD. “By the word of God the Heavens were of old,” &c. It had an origin—it is not external ; it arose not from chance, but from the Divine Word. There are two kinds of creation : the production of the rudimental elements of the universe out of nothing, and the organization of these elements into new forms of life and beauty. Whilst both are the results of the Divine Word, it is to the latter only that the apostle here refers. “The heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water.” By the heavens and the earth is meant, as we have said, the globe and its atmosphere. The meaning of this somewhat obscure expres-

sion is, according to learned authorities, that this material system with which we are here associated was *formed out of water, and by means of water*. That water was the basis and the agent. Moses gives this idea—he tells us that “The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” Some of the Greek sages, with Thales at their head, propounded the same theory. They referred the universe to water as the first principle—the *αρχη*. Apart from Revelation, this is not an unnatural conjecture. What more ubiquitous, more mighty, more immensely operative, than water? It surrounds us on all hands. Above us we see it sailing in the clouds, beneath us it sparkles on every flower, flows in the river, and rolls in the ocean. Dig into the earth, it is there; ascend the clouds and it is there. However, whether water was the primary element out of which this glorious system was organized or not, God’s Word was the effective cause. It was His Word, His Volition that did it. He said, Let it be, and it was. “By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.”

We infer from this passage, that a Christian’s view is:—

II. HE REGARDS IT AS DEPENDENT EVERY MOMENT UPON THE DIVINE WORD. “The heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store.”

First: *That the past changes of nature are to be referred to the Divine Word*. Peter here refers to one tremendous catastrophe. “The world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.” The very element out of which the world seemed to be formed, destroyed it. At His bidding our greatest friends will become our greatest foes; our very Saviour, the destroyer. How was this? By the Word of God. The deluge was no accident. “I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth,” &c. The earthquake, the tornado, the blight, the pestilence, all these things, in nature, come from the Word of God. His Will is in all—all are but the sounds of voice.



Secondly : *That the present existence of nature is to be referred to His Word.* “But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word kept in store”—are preserved in their present state. What supports the stupendous fabric ? The word of God. He upholds all things by the word of His power. His word is the breath of its life, the impulse of its motions, “the spirit in its wheels,” the law of its operations. Fresh sounds in nature are but fresh modulations of His voice ; fresh appearances in nature are but fresh editions of His word.

If this is a right view of material nature ; if it was originally produced by, and is every moment depending upon, the Divine Word, we may infer three important considerations.

First : *That it is absurd to cite the so-called laws of nature against the fulfilment of God’s revealed purposes.* This is just what the scoffing sceptics did in the days of Peter. They put the order of nature against the revealed purposes of God ; they concluded that because nature appeared to be regular in its operations, the catastrophe connected with the advent of Christ would never transpire. In reply to this, Peter teaches that nature itself is essentially dependent upon the word of God ; and as that word could at any moment reverse the laws of nature, it is absurd to plead them as an argument against the fulfilment of His revealed purpose. Indeed there are cases on record where what is called the laws of nature were suspended or infringed in order to carry out a revealed purpose. The laws of nature seemed against the deluge, the destruction of Sodom, the dividing of the Red Sea and the Jordan : but God purposed that these things should take place, and the laws of nature yielded. Let us follow, therefore, the Divine purpose. The laws of nature may seem against a resurrection, &c., but the purpose of God will be fulfilled.

If material nature was originally produced by, and is ever dependent upon, the word of God, we infer :—

Secondly : *That there can be no real contradiction between its facts and those of the Bible.* The most scientific men are

constantly making mistakes in interpreting nature, and the most erudite theologians commit mistakes in the interpretation of the Bible ; apparent discrepancies, therefore, are, from the limitation of the human faculties and the fallibility of the human judgment, to be expected. But God cannot contradict Himself. Between all the revelations of His mind, in whatever age, realm of being, or form of manifestation, there is perfect harmony.

Moreover, if material nature was originally produced by, and is ever dependent upon, the Divine Word, we infer :—

Thirdly :—*That its relation to the soul should be especially realized.* As the word of God is thus in material nature, material nature has a meaning. “Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.” This earth with its encircling firmament of orbs and systems should not be regarded merely as a storehouse of provisions, to supply animal wants and gratify animal sensibilities, nor merely as a realm for scientific experiment and poetic revelry ; but as an organ of Divine thought and feeling to the human soul. It is the voice of God to the human heart, a divine appeal to the human conscience. Nature has a moral meaning, God’s word is in it.

It is His thought in form.  
His will in action.

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SUBJECT :—*Man’s External Universe as Maintained by God  
for a Moral Purpose.*

“Reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness ; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”—(vv. 7-9.)

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Seventy-second.

THESE words teach :—

I. THAT MAN'S EXTERNAL UNIVERSE IS MAINTAINED BY GOD. He keeps it in store, He reserves it, He holds it up. There are four thoughts suggested here in relation to God's maintenance of material nature.

First : *However long He may continue to uphold it, He does not overlook the claims of His Justice.* There are before Him "a day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." Crime may revel on for ages, countless generations of wicked men may come, each more corrupt than its predecessor ; yet Justice is not overlooked. She is in the distant future and has a glorious day for her vindication. This will be a day of "perdition" to the ungodly. This day is here called by Peter "the day of judgment," "the day of the Lord," "the day of God." What a day !

Secondly : *However long He may continue to uphold it, duration is nothing to Him.* "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." *He does not view time as we do.* Though we measure time by the revolution of our earth, we *feel* it by the revolution of our souls. A succession of painful thoughts makes us sensible of duration. Give us one great all-absorbing happy thought, and years will appear only as the vibration of the pendulum. Ages with us are moments in heaven ; moments with us are ages in hell. But God has no mental succession. He has one calm, bright, all-comprehensive, unbroken thought. "A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night." *He is not limited to time as we are.* When we have a work to do we hasten to its accomplishment, because we feel that our lives are short and very uncertain. Not so with Him. He has eternity to work in. He need not hurry.

Thirdly : *However long He may continue to uphold it, He does not forget His promise.* "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness." Generations may pass away, millenniums depart, worlds and systems decay and sink to ruin, He never forgets His promise. Witness His promise to Noah, to Abraham, and to the old pro-

phets concerning Christ. The question is, has He promised? If so, though countless centuries pass, it will be realized. "All flesh is grass, and the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field: the grass withereth and the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand for ever."

Fourthly: *However long He may continue to uphold it, His forbearance is manifest through the whole.* He "is longsuffering to us-ward." Though time does not affect God, man's character does. Sin calls for punishment, and the reason why it is delayed is God's forbearance. For sixty centuries now God has been upholding this world, whilst its tenants have been blaspheming His name, profaning His institutes, transgressing His laws, rebelling against His throne. He "is longsuffering."

These words teach :—

II. THAT MAN'S EXTERNAL UNIVERSE IS MAINTAINED BY GOD FOR A MORAL PURPOSE. "Not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." What is the purpose? Why is this world kept in existence for so many ages? Is it that its human tenantry might gather its fruits, explore its mines, navigate its oceans, in order to accumulate wealth? Or, is it that they might luxuriate amidst the animal gratifications which it furnishes, revel amidst the elements which minister to the senses, and pander to the passions? Few would theoretically profess this, but the millions practically declare it. What then? Is it that they might train the intellect to think, and to fill the mind with knowledge? Not even this. *It is the moral restoration of man.* "That none should perish, but that all should come to repentance." First: *This moral restoration of man requires "repentance."* It is implied that without "repentance" there must be perishing. What is it to "perish" spiritually? Summarily, it is not to lose existence, but it is to lose everything that is necessary to make existence worth having, and to prevent it from becoming an intolerable curse. "Repentance" is necessary for this; and repentance is moral

reformation, a turning of the soul from the false to the true, from the selfish to the benevolent, from the creature to the CREATOR.

Secondly: *This moral restoration of man is according to the will of God.* "He is not willing that any should perish."

(1) His goodness as seen in nature would indicate this. (2)

His preservation of men on the earth would indicate this.

(3) His provisions in Jesus Christ would indicate this. (4)

His declarations in the Bible would indicate this. "He is not willing that any should perish." This is the explanation of

the long continuance of the world. Why has not this earth long ago been blotted from the firmament of the universe?

"He is not willing that any should perish."

From these remarks we have:—

First: *A test to determine whether we are rightly using the world or not.* Its end is our restoration. Are we restored?

Secondly: *A rebuke to those who refer man's damnation to the purpose of God.* "HE IS NOT WILLING," &c.

SUBJECT:—*Man's External Universe as Awaiting a Tremendous Crisis.*

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein, shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"—(vv. 10-12.)

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Seventy-third.

THERE is a *spiritual conflagration* now going on. Christ came "to send fire on the earth." His word like a fire consumes the false and the corrupt. The flame which was but a dim spark at first, fanned by the breath of the Spirit, has been growing for centuries, and will one day break forth in



tremendous power, "burn as an oven," and cause sin in all its colossal forms "to pass away with a great noise," and the "elements to melt with fervent heat." This conflagration is predicted, and is now in course of developement. May the breath of heaven soon fan its flickering fires to a world-wide flame!

But the conflagration in the text is a *material* one. It is a burning up of that system of things which the sceptic misinterprets; which once "being overflowed with water perished," and which was originally produced by, and is ever dependent upon, the word of God.

We infer three things from this passage:—

I. THAT THE CHARACTER OF THIS CRISIS WILL BE VERY TERRIBLE. There are several things in the text which give the idea of terribleness.

First: *The agent by which it will be accomplished,—“fire,” is terrible.* Fire, when not in its latent but active state, is the most terrible force in the world. There is agony in its touch. Forms the most beautiful it turns to ashes. The strongest life must yield to its power. But now it will be let loose. Water which destroyed the old world is in some of its forms a terrible power, but life can subsist in it. You can touch it without pain, you can float on its surface, you can construct a vessel to bear you over its surging floods and seas. But not so with "fire." No ark will bear you over a fiery deluge.

Secondly: *The extensiveness of its scene makes it terrible.* "The heavens shall pass away." "The earth also and all the works that are therein." We do not suppose, of course, that this means the whole of the material universe. Millions of starry worlds and systems the flames will never reach; but it means the whole of the material universe with which we are connected,—the earth and its atmosphere. This earth and its atmosphere are our material universe. And over this region the devouring flames are to spread. They will fill the circumambient air, they will enfold the globe. Fire

now, even in its most terrible forms, is reined in. Whether you see it belching its floods from the volcano, flashing in the lightning, or enfolding cities in its sheets of flame, you feel that it is under a restraining force. It is circumscribed. But *now* it is to be let loose. The lion of all material forces has left his den and speeds ravenously through the world. The earth,—its rivers and oceans, its fields and its forests, and all the “works that are therein;” all that human genius has created, that human industry and skill through all ages have produced, all the works of God and man on this earth, will be burned up.

“The cloud-capp’d towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
The solemn temples, the great globe itself  
And all that it inherits, shall dissolve;  
And like the baseless fabric of a vision  
Leave not a wreck behind.”

Thirdly: *The tumult with which it will be attended is terrible.* “A great noise.” There are some sounds that are very terrible, that shake one’s very soul with horror. The howl of the wind rising into a tempest, the rumble of the approaching thunderbolt, the wild and dismal roar of the ocean, when lashed into fury;—these are all sounds more or less of terror. But there are animal sounds still more so. The groans of the dying, the moanings of bereaved love, the shrieks of an agonized heart;—these are fearful sounds. But put all these awful sounds together, put the most dismal sounds of material nature, the most piercing shrieks of animals, and the most vehement cries of humanity together; and they will be but at most a faint emblem of that “great noise” connected with the destroying of the world. What a noise is produced by a little bonfire, what a noise too, by a little steam from the engine; but what must be the noise of burning forests, and boiling oceans, of falling cities and rocking mountains, of bursting earthquakes and disimprisoned thunders, of jostling islands, exploding gases, mingling with the screams of burning animals and the shrieks of wicked men! This “great noise” will be very terrible.

Fourthly: *The unexpectedness with which it will come is another element of terror.* "It will come as a thief in the night." It will not come as a thief in some respects. *A thief comes without warning.* But men through all ages were warned of this. *A thief has no right to come.* But it is righteousness that brings on this crisis. *A thief may be resisted.* There is a possibility of turning him back; but not so with this crisis. It must come. But it will be like a thief inasmuch as it will be unexpected. "Like the deluge." "As it was in the days of Noah," &c. Is it not a terrible thing to be taken by surprise?

## II. THAT THE APPROACH OF THIS CRISIS IS VERY CERTAIN.

First: *It is certain that there is a point in the future that will terminate men's present connexion with this earth.* Generations of men on this planet will not proceed on in an endless succession. There will come a point when the last generation will appear, when the last man child will be born. The end will come:—the end of house building, farming, merchandize, legislating, the end of births and deaths. The end of the probationary system—the mediatorial economy. Christ "will deliver up the Kingdom," &c. The analogies of nature, the general sentiment of mankind, and the word of God, concur in giving us this conviction.

Secondly: *There is conclusive evidence that this period will be attended with a conflagration.* There is a possibility of it. He who once destroyed the world by water, can, unquestionably, do so by fire. There is a probability of it. The world shows every facility for it. We are surrounded on all hands with inflammable materials. Beneath our feet, from the crust of the earth to its centre, there is one mighty mass of fire smouldering on, small portions of it are constantly breaking forth, and the whole is ready at any moment to send forth its flaming floods. It seems to lie in wait as an officer of Justice awaiting orders.\* There is reason to believe that conflagrations have taken place in other worlds. "During

\* A terrible earthquake has just occurred at Naples.

the last two or three centuries" says a popular expositor, "upwards of thirteen fixed stars have disappeared. One of them situated in the northern hemisphere presented a peculiar brilliancy, and was so bright as to be seen by the naked eye at mid-day, It seemed to be on fire, appearing at first of a dazzling white, then of reddish yellow, and lastly of an ashy pale color. La Place supposes that it was burned up as it has never been seen since." Moreover, many of the ancient philosophers entertained the idea that the world would be destroyed by fire. An old author, referring to the testimony of these sages, quaintly says, "We have heard as it were the cry of fire through all antiquity and among all the people of the earth."

But whilst these considerations are all favorable to the belief, the text is alone sufficient for our faith. No language can be more explicit than this. "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

III. THAT THE PROSPECT OF THIS CRISIS SHOULD EXERT ON MANKIND A HALLOWING INFLUENCE. "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God?" The apostle states two effects which the prospect ought to produce upon us:—

First: *Practical holiness in every part of our life.*—"Holy conversation and godliness." If all our material interests are thus to pass away, with what earnestness ought we to cultivate those principles of character, those dispositions of mind, and those habits of life which will abide for ever? Indeed on the supposition that there would come no such universal conflagration as the one we have been contemplating, there is a gradual destruction of the world, so far as we are concerned, going on every day, and therefore the need of cultivating this godly character. Time like a fire is constantly

burning up the heavens and the earth that constitute our little world. One star of promise after another fades from our horizon. One flower after another withers from our landscape. We are fast losing our hold upon this world. To the poor emigrant who leaves for ever his native land, the shores, the cliffs and the varied sceneries of his own country seem to be moving off from him as he rolls on his watery path; but, in reality it is he that is leaving them. The illusion matters not. It is practically the same. It is so with life: we are sailing farther and farther from our interest in the material every day. And this is the same so far as we are concerned, as if the world was leaving us. Let us then cultivate a godly character.

Secondly: *An earnest longing of the soul for the future.* "Looking for and hasting," &c. The prospect of this crisis ought not to alarm us; if we are Christians we ought to hail it. For should we be in the midst of the flames, He who was with the three Hebrew youths in the fiery furnace, even "the Son of Man will be with us," and not a hair of our head shall be injured. And besides out of all this ruin will emerge a new and far more glorious world.

"When suns have waned and worlds sublime,  
Their final revolutions told  
This soul shall triumph over time,  
As though each orb had never roll'd."

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SUBJECT:—*Man's External Universe as Assuming a  
Renovated Form.*

"Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."—(v. 13.)

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Seventy-fourth.

FROM this verse we infer:—

I. THAT THE NEW HEAVENS AND NEW EARTH WILL EMERGE FROM THE RUINS OF THE PRESENT. There are only three at



all reasonable conjectures as to what the apostle means by the new heavens and the new earth. Either an absolutely new system—a system created out of nothing, to take the place of this; or a dwelling in some unoccupied district of space; or a system already in existence into which good men will be at last introduced as their final abode. As the house into which we go as residents at first is a new house to us, however old, and we call it so,—so the world into which we may be introduced though it may have been in existence for millions of years will be at the first a new world to us. The continent of America is as old as the British Islands, albeit, it was a new world to Englishmen a few years ago. Or, it may mean some new system of things emerging out of the ruins of the present. This is far the most probable for the following reasons:—

First: *Our planet has already undergone changes somewhat analogous.* Geology would give us to understand that this globe had passed through numerous changes, each one an improvement upon its previous state, in order to fit it for a higher class of tenants. The heavens and the earth existed in a chaotic state before they were arranged for man. They were in a sense made new for him. Again we are told that the world was “destroyed” by the deluge, so that it was in a sense a new world on which Noah planted his foot when he left the ark.

Secondly: *The apparent indestructibility of matter.* The Creator, of course, can annihilate both matter and mind; but we have no instance of His doing so. And fire, the most destructive of all known forces, cannot destroy. Vegetation springs from ashes. In the mining and smelting districts of Wales we have seen mountains of ashes covered with verdure. Life seems imperishable. After the general conflagration a few springs may make the earth as verdant and beautiful as ever; like the tropical sun which scorches the fields and meadows only to yield a more luxuriant vegetation on the return of the former and latter rain. I see nothing to interfere with the belief that after the con-

flagration our earth may bloom in a beauty surpassing that of Eden, and roll on in its orbit more luminous than ever, with calmer and brighter heavens about it.

Thirdly: *The moral events that have transpired on this earth.* When I think that the Son of God visited this planet, breathed its air, trod its hills, walked its shores, lived on its productions, and found a grave in its dust; when I think that the battles of the moral universe were fought here; when I think of the millions of the good who have prayed and taught and died here;—the more, in fact, I think of its moral history, the more disposed I am to believe that the conflagration will make it a far more glorious world, than to believe that it will leave it in destruction and ruin.

Fourthly: *The context makes it evident.* Peter is throughout the passage speaking of this world, and after referring to its conflagration it was natural for him to refer to the result. Lest the reader should fancy that the fire should entirely destroy this beautiful world, it was natural for him to intimate that a new heaven and a new earth would grow out of it. Who can tell the physical improvement? In many respects this world seems surpassingly beautiful. It has phases of loveliness and grandeur, and poetic influence which often entrance us. Still, physically it seems in some respects capable of improvement. The climate is fitful. The sun is oftentimes too scorching, and the winds bleak, enough to freeze the current of life. Thunder and lightning are nursed in its clouds. The seeds of disease and death float in its atmosphere. poisons grow in its fruits. Thorns and briars it yields spontaneously, but it renders no provision for man without much struggle and sweat. Ravenous beasts prowl through our forests, and noxious vermin beset our path. Yes, beautiful as this world is, it can, I trow, be improved; and in the new heaven and the new earth this improvement will be realized.

II- THE NEW HEAVENS AND THE NEW EARTH WILL BE THE ABODE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS." "Wherein dwelleth righteousness." This is its moral glory, this it is that marks it off in

glorious contrast from its present character. This world at present is like the house of the old leper, every part defiled. But "righteousness" will *dwell* in its future state. It will *dwell universally*. On the earth now righteousness has seldom a local habitation; its disciples have frequently "wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented"—wandering "in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." It is only a residence here and there even now. On the vast districts of the globe it has no footing. But it will *fill* the "new heavens and the new earth;" it will be the vital air breathed by every spirit, the light falling on every object and flooding every soul. It will *dwell supremely*. Now, wherever found, it is in a servile state. Right is under the foot of might; but in the "new heavens and earth" it will be regnant; it will sit as the empress of all, giving law to every thought, feeling, and purpose. It will *dwell exclusively*. There will be nothing of an opposite character. "There shall in nowise enter it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie." It will *dwell permanently*. Its regions will never be invaded, its authority will never be shaken, its glory will never be overshadowed by evil.

This *in-dwelling* righteousness is its glory. The most bright and majestic objects of nature looked at through a corrupt and unrighteous heart are dull and uninteresting. How transcendently enchanting would even our present heaven and earth be to its human tenantry if they were viewed through the emotions of righteous hearts. Give a depraved spirit subjective righteousness, and you give him at the same time a new external universe though his local position continues the same. His heaven will disclose new streaks of splendor, his earth new forms, and aspects of loveliness, and grandeur. No one can see God's beauty in the external world who has not moral beauty within; no one can catch the sweet harmonies without, who has not the moral harmonies within. The soul is the measure and mirror of man's universe.

III. THAT THE NEW HEAVENS AND EARTH ARE OBJECTS OF PROSPECTIVE INTERESTS TO THE GOOD. "We according to his promise look for new heavens and a new earth." This looking implies two things:—

First: *Sufficient evidence to believe that these new heavens and earth will appear.* Looking means expecting—expecting implies reason. You may desire a thing, but you can never expect it unless you have some more or less plausible reason for believing that it will come to pass. Now the good man has sufficient evidence to believe in these "new heavens," his evidence is based upon the promise. "We, according to his promise," &c. Where is the promise? See Isa. lxxv. 17, lxxvi. 22, and Rev. xxi. 1. If a promise is made and not fulfilled it must be from one or other of the following reasons:—*insincerity, changeability, or incapacity.* Neither of these can apply to the GREAT ONE.

The looking implies—

Secondly: *A conviction that some advantages will accrue from the appearance.* Looking implies desire—desire implies the desirable. Of what advantage will this new material system be to the good? In it he will see without a veil the Everlasting Father and His blessed Son, and be made for ever like them, shine in their brightness and live in their love. In it, men shall enjoy the full perfection of their being—physical, intellectual, and moral. In it they will secure the blessed results of Christ's mediation, and mingle with the greatest and holiest spirits for ever.

Brothers, let us then amidst all the conscious imperfections, and depressing trials of the present state, look onward to the "new heaven and new earth." The present heaven and earth will pass away; they "will perish, and as a vesture they shall be folded up;" but let us with buoyant heart look on to "the new." When the old are gone, there will bend over us a firmament, there will smile around us an earth arched with ever-brightening splendor, and dispread with ever-heightening charms.

SUBJECT:—*The Keeping of the Divine Word.\**

“But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.”—1 John, ii. 5.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Seventy-fifth.

MANY persons are in the habit of mystifying the very things which it is of the first importance to have most plainly before their minds. Such is the case often *with respect to religious principles and doctrines*. How many, for instance, perplex themselves about the decrees of God and the doctrine of personal election. Now, God never requires us to know or act upon his decrees respecting ourselves or others. The opened Book is written for our edification and comfort—the sealed Book has been given into the hands of the Lamb, where we may well be content to leave it.

Again, others distress themselves with questions of *personal interest*. Am I a Christian and in a state of salvation? The truth of this matter may soon be satisfactorily determined as to the fact, whether so as to feeling or not. All that is of importance may be included in these two questions:—Do I love God? Am I, in an evangelical sense, in Christ Jesus? Now, it so happens, that there is one proof, and that a practical one, which will settle both these questions affirmatively, viz.: keeping the word of God, called in other verses, “commands,” and “commandments.” I think it is evident that the apostle in making this statement has special reference to the command, to love God, and our brother, v. 9, 10. In chap. iii. ver. 23, we find connected with love—faith in the name of Jesus Christ. John lays it down as a principle on which decision may be founded, that the love of God is perfected in us, that is, that it is implanted in us—that it has its due influence, its proper ascendancy, if we keep the word of God.

It may now be asked, what is meant by keeping the word of God? Here a vital matter is before us.

\* From a MS. of the late Rev. G. Bristow, of Exeter.



I. THE KEEPING IS IN DIRECT OPPOSITION TO LOSING IT, LETTING IT ESCAPE FROM US. How many having heard the word of God, and been impressed by it, have lost it ! And what a loss !

II. THE KEEPING IT, IMPLIES A CARE TO RETAIN IT. To retain it in the understanding, in the conscience, in the affections, and in the practice. But we may still enquire, in what aspects the word of God so kept, is regarded by the Christian ? (1) *As a law to govern him.* (2) *As a revelation of the grace which saves him.* (3) *As a promise of Divine goodness to cheer him.* (4) *As a pledge of eternal life to animate him.* (5) *As a means of communion with God to sanctify him.*

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## Stars of Christendom.

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VINCENT OF LERENS.

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WE give an article to Vincent of Lerins, because chiefly he was the first distinctly to set up the claim of the authority of the Church in matters of doctrine. A moment's thought will show the fundamental import of this question. If you once admit the Holy Catholic Church to be an outwardly defined and chartered corporation, all individual freedom of thought is at an end, and you have only to ascertain which is the true Church, and surrender yourself with hasty penitence to her authority. Henceforth, as to doctrine, you are no longer to read the scriptures by your own light, but by her direction ; nor must you ever yield to what they seem to you the immediate authority of God, but only to that authority as it reaches you through the divinely commissioned church. You do not come into immediate contact with God at all.

The known particulars of Vincent's life bear no proportion to the theologic significance of his name. It seems that he had once been a soldier, but in the early part of the

fifth century had retreated from the turmoils of that way of life into the monastery of Lerins, an island on the south coast of Gaul. Here, in the year 434, he wrote the work on which his fame rests; which, at first published under the title of "The Pilgrim against Heretics," is now generally known by the longer one, "Admonition for the Antiquity and Universality of the Catholic Faith against the Profane Novelties of all Heretics." This is a very serious, earnest, and sober work. In view of the shortness of life, he wished to snatch an opportunity of rendering true service to the eternal cause of truth before he hurried from this world. In view of the increase of heresy, he wished to do something to stem the torrent of falsehood, and to provide a guide and rule for the sincere enquirer after truth. It is possible, and it is believed by some, that Vincent was incited in particular by difference from Augustin, whom the Semi-Palagian party called an "Innovator." Vincent died about 450.

The "Admonition" originally consisted of two parts, but the second being lost, he gives a mere abridgment of it.

In order to avoid heresy, he says, we should adhere to the teaching of Scripture. But how may the tradition of the Catholic Church be determined? Here he lays down three tests of criteria of Catholic doctrine, to wit, universality, antiquity, and unanimous consent. If we find that some part of the church, contemporary with us, differs from the general body, we must prefer the body to the member, and thus follow universality. But if some doctrine which opposes the faith of the fathers, appears spreading generally in the Church, we must prefer the fathers to the children, and thus follow antiquity. And if finally, we find, even amongst the fathers, a serious difference between the doctrine of individual teachers, and that of the general ancient Church, we must prefer the general voice of antiquity to the particular, and thus follow unanimity.

"Having, with much care and diligence, inquired of great numbers of learned and pious men, for a sure and general rule, whereby to discern the true Catholic doctrine from the errors of heretics, I received from almost all this answer: That he who would escape the deceits and snares of heretics, and be preserved sound and entire in the right faith, should secure himself by this two-fold method: first, by the authority of the Divine law, and then by the tradition of the Catholic Church.

"But here, perhaps, some may ask; since the canon of Scripture is perfect, and abundantly sufficient, what need can there be to join with it the authority of the Church's interpretation? The reason is this: Such is the sublimity of the sacred Scripture, that all do not understand it alike; but there are very many different interpretations of it: Novatus understands it in one sense; Donatus in another; Sabellius in another; and, in the like manner, Arius, Photinus, Priscillian, Pelagius, Nestorius: insomuch, that there are almost as many opinions formed upon it, as there are men in the world. It is therefore necessary, upon account of those numerous and various deviations of error, that the line of the prophetic and apostolic interpretation should be guided according to the rules of the ecclesiastic and Catholic sense.

"And in the Catholic Church itself, great care must be taken, that we hold that which has been believed everywhere, always, and by all; for that is Catholic, as the word itself shows. We are therefore to confess that one true faith, which the whole Church confesseth, throughout the whole world; nor are we to depart from that faith, which our ancestors and holy fathers have maintained. We are also to follow the determinations which have been made by all, or almost all, the bishops, and eminent men of the Church; so shall we obtain universality, antiquity, and consent."\*

When Vincent speaks of universality, or unanimity, it is clear that he does not use the term absolutely, but approximately.

It is almost ludicrous to see how this harmless little treatise has been by Papists read with ecstacy, and has frightened Protestants from their propriety. It is true that Vincent is not very finished in conception, nor very precise in language; but, if interpreted with candor and common sense, we believe that his rules will be found wholesome and worthy of reliance. We are quite prepared to profess allegiance to them, if we are allowed three safeguards, which Vincent would probably not have refused.

First: What does he mean by the "Catholic Church?" If an outwardly defined and privileged corporation, we demur; but if a spiritual community, whose boundaries are defined by character, we so far agree.

\* Commonitorium, cc. i-iii.

Second: We demur to the authority of tradition, conceived of as co-ordinate with that of Scripture. But we think that deference is due to the authority of the Church, as the interpreter of Scripture; just as in reading the Hebrew Bible we acknowledge the authority of a good lexicon. The purity, sweetness and spiritual genius of certain teachers afford them sympathy with Scripture and superior insight; and the nearness of the ancients to apostolic times renders their interpretation considerable and authentic.

Third: These rules must not be so taken as to exclude progressiveness in knowledge. There is much truth which the Catholic Church has not yet found, but which she aspires to know, which she holds implicitly and desires to hold explicitly. The Bible is in advance of the Church and of all divines. Scripture is inexhaustible. Novelties are of two sorts; the one inconsistent with, and subversive of, the Catholic faith; the other, one with the Catholic faith, and generally recognized as such, as soon as known. The topmost branches, which the climber reaches last, are yet one with the root. The former novelties Vincent condemns, the latter surely not. If they have not antiquity directly on their side, they are yet vitally and organically kindred to the doctrine of the ancient Church.

Upward we press—the air is clear,  
And the sphere-music heard:  
The Lord hath yet more light and truth  
To break forth from His word.

W. C.

## Literary Notices.

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

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### THE REVIEWER'S CANON:

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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GNOMON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. By JOHN ALBERT BENDEL.  
Revised and Edited by Rev. ANDREW R. FAUSSET, M.A. Vols.  
I. & III. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark.

JOHANN ALBRECHT BENDEL was born in 1687, near Stuttgart. Having studied theology at Tübingen for four years, he became a curate. Shortly after he became tutor at his college. He thought it very desirable in certain cases for a matured man to return from the pastoral work to the academic study of theology. A young man leaves college with a little divinity, a great deal of pedantry, and a small stock of sermons. The pedantry soon rubs off in practical life, as well as the slight taste for theology which was associated therewith. The sermonizing henceforth consists of little more than the recasting of the original limited material. Perhaps in an average county, not more than three pastors are able to read their Hebrew Bible. It were well for themselves and the churches, could a few of the best follow Bendel's example. Since, however, a memoir of Bendel has been for some years in existence in a cheap form in this country, since there is one occupying ten of Herzog's large and closely-packed pages, and, above all, since the Rev. A. R. Fausset speaks of one by himself which is to appear in the fifth volume, we refrain from further biographic details. The fame of Bendel rests chiefly on his critical edition of the Greek Testament—which stirred up the zeal of Wetstein and has proved serviceable to Griesbach, Scholz and Lachmann—and on the work before us.

The Gnomon or Indicator, as the reader is aware, is that part of the *Dial*—we must not digress—which points to the loadstar, and indicates the position of the sun. The full title of the Book is, "Gnomon of the New Testament, in which, from the native force of the words,



the simplicity, depth, mutual fitness,\* and wholesomeness of the heavenly meanings are *indicated*." We transcribe from the excellent translation before us Bengel's own words in explanation of the principles and nature of his work. "Scripture is the foundation of the Church: the Church is the guardian of Scripture. When the Church is in strong health, the light of Scripture shines bright; when the Church is sick, Scripture is corroded by neglect: and thus it happens, that the countenance of Scripture and that of the Church are wont to exhibit simultaneously the appearance either of health, or else of sickness; so that it comes to pass that the treatment of Scripture corresponds from time to time, with the condition of the Church. That treatment has had various ages, from the earliest times, down to the present day. The first may be called *Native* or *natural*; the second, *Moral*; the third, *Dry*; the fourth, *Revived*; the fifth, *Polemic*, *Dogmatic*, *Topical*; the sixth, *Critical*, *Polyglott*, *Antiquarian*, *Homiletic*. That mode therefore of examining, expounding, elucidating, and illustrating Scripture which is offered by Scripture itself, has not as yet prevailed to any great extent in the Church." Preface, page 7. "I have long since given the name of GNOMON, a modest, and, as I think, appropriate, title, to these *Exegetical Annotations*, which perform only the office of an *Index*; and, I should have chosen the term *Index*, as the title of my work, but for the misconception which would have arisen, in the minds of most persons, from the ordinary and technical use of that term. It is, in short, my intention, briefly to *point out*, or *indicate*, the full force of words and sentences in the New Testament, which, though really and inherently belonging to them, is not always observed by all at first sight; so that the reader, being introduced by the straight road into the text, may find as rich pasture there as possible. The Gnomon points the way with sufficient clearness. If you are wise, the text itself teaches you all things." Page 9. The last two sentences appear in the original in the form of a curious Latin distich. "God, not as man, but as God, utters words worthy of Himself. Deep and lofty are His thoughts: His words, which flow from them, are of inexhaustible efficacy. In the case also of His inspired interpreters, although they may not have received human instruction, their language is most exact. The expression of their words corresponds exactly with the impression of the things in their minds; and it is so far from being beneath the comprehension of those who hear it, that, rather, they seldom attain to its entire meaning." P. 43. "I doubt not, that those who have by degrees become accustomed to it will agree with me in my admiration of the language of the sacred writers. The painter by the most delicate stroke of his brush, the musician by the swiftest touch of fleeting notes, exercises the highest

\* Or proportional mingling, *concinntitas*.

skill of his art: and in the perfection of anything whatever, those minute particulars which escape the ears and eyes of the ignorant and unrefined, bestow the most exquisite delight on those who are capable of appreciating them—a delight springing from the very root and essence of the thing itself. Such is the case with Holy Scripture.” P. 49. “For my part, I do not act exclusively as a Paraphrast, a Grammarian, a Scholiast, an Antiquary, a Logician, a Doctrinal Expositor, a Controversialist, or an Inferential Commentator; but I take *all* these characters by turns, without stint or distinction.” P. 50.

The work itself, which, in Stendel's edition, we have possessed and valued for many years, it were superfluous to praise. John Wesley's Notes upon the New Testament are mainly derived from this. He calls the author “that great light of the Christian world.” There exists not a better commentary on the New Testament than this Gnomon of Bengel. Were we carefully to mention three or four, as transcending all others, this would be one. One of its chief excellencies is its freedom—freedom from trammels, trammels theologic, trammels exegetic, the conventional maxims and ruts of commentators. Bengel never forgets that his business is twofold; first, to find out the meaning of a passage, and then tell it to the reader. When therefore you read Bengel, you are not looking at “the heavenly meanings” through the obfuscating and distorting medium of a dingy-coloured theologic glass. From freedom springs freshness. Let the student, who really wants to know what evangelists and apostles say, take our advice and procure this book, read it carefully through with the Greek Testament open before him, and we predict a result singular in gratification, personal profit, qualification for service. As the style is remarkably condensed, not a word should be lightly past over. The references are well selected, and one of them often throws more light on a passage than a lengthy comment in the usual manner. Valuable Synoptical Tables are prefixed to the different books. Bengel, in his Harmony, adheres to the three-passover scheme; but, though he speaks strongly, we incline to the opinion of more recent investigators in favour of four.

It only remains to say, that the translation is scholarly and faithful. The Rev. A. R. Fausset is a competent scholar, and he has able coadjutors. The style of Bengel is so delicately felicitous, that there occurs a measure of the same difficulty in dealing with it as with poetry. It unavoidably loses somewhat by passing into another tongue. Though the translators would perhaps in some cases have succeeded better had they rendered with less freedom, yet on the whole we think that they have fulfilled their office with exemplary faithfulness, and that they and the enterprising publishers have conferred a great benefit on the ministry, by the reproduction of a

work, which, after all the good it has already wrought, is, we would hope, yet destined to impart a new stimulus to, and exert a healthy influence upon, Biblical study, and thus efficiently serve the cause of godliness and humanity.

The value of the translated work is increased by explanatory notes. Of the present volumes, the first comprises Matthew and Mark, and the third, Romans and Corinthians. The second, fourth, and fifth may be expected in a short time. The price of the whole, twenty-eight shillings, to subscribers, is low in the commercial sense—the book has a handsome appearance and the type is agreeable to read—and in relation to the excellence of the work the sum multiplied ten-fold “were as the small dust of the balance.” Of all the services of Messrs. Clark to Biblical Literature, they have rendered the greatest by placing this inestimable help within the reach of the poorest English student.

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COMMENTARY ON THE BOOK OF KINGS. By KARL FRIEDRICH KEIL, D.D., Ph. D. Translated by JAMES MURPHY, LL.D. Supplemented by a COMMENTARY ON THE BOOKS OF CHRONICLES. By ERNST BERTHEAU. Translated by JAMES MARTEN, B.A. Two volumes. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.

THESE volumes constitute the last two of Clark's Foreign Theological Library for the year 1857; a series so often praised in the *Homilist*, as to require no further word of commendation. A separate English Commentary on Kings was much wanted, and this want is now well supplied by the present excellent work of the learned Professor of Dorpat. We think that the publishers have acted with judgment, in preferring to supplement the Commentary on Kings by the greater part of that of Bertheau on Chronicles, rather than with that of the former author. “The character of that work is purely apologetical.” Bertheau's is “the latest commentary that has appeared in Germany on the Books of Chronicles.” The other was written before the Assyrian discoveries. The translations appear to us a great improvement on those of some of the earlier volumes of the same Library.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THEISM: An Inquiry into the Dependence of Theism on Metaphysics, and the only possible way of arriving at a Proof of the Existence of God. London: Ward & Co.

We emphatically record our opinion that this is a good book. To reach, by a method purely *a priori*, the conclusion, that God exists, is declared to be impossible. To attempt the same by a method purely *a posteriori*, is likewise said to be hopeless. The method commended is

that which combines both. But this of course introduces the question of the validity of Metaphysics, or Philosophy properly so called; for the *a priori* principles to be combined with the results of experience are metaphysical. This is followed by an exposition of the method of proof, which, again, includes a discussion of causation. The work concludes with the proof for the being of God from organism. In the course of it, there is much thorough discussion, which should be well considered by certain profoundly superficial sages of our time. The principles developed in the Second Part have long been ours, and we are glad to see them set forth in a work which meets one of the most important wants of the age. The book is anonymous, but is evidently from the hand of a master, probably from Professor Hickok.

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EARNEST CHRISTIANITY ILLUSTRATED; or, Selections from the Journal of the Rev. JAMES CAUGHEY. With a Brief Sketch of Mr. Caughey's Life. By JOHN UNWIN, Sheffield. London: Partridge & Co.

WE do not thoroughly like this title. It savors of cant. We believe that the word *earnest* was brought into fashion many years ago by Thomas Carlyle; a man whose spirit is utterly alien to that of the men by whom it has since been hackneyed; and who, had he anticipated their manner, would either not have used it at all, or have done so with such accompaniment as to spoil it for their purpose. The Rev. James Caughey, to judge by these specimens, is about the same kind of work in America, which, within these four years, has been doing in this country; to wit, reviving and perpetuating a spurious animal Christianity, which the lovers of true godliness hoped had perished, or, at least, irremediably declined. Of course, we speak not absolutely, but with reservation. There is a large mixture of good in these men. They make us sad. Their popularity proves nothing. We deny not that they do good; our grief is, that they do no more, and that they do much harm. The true question is of a pure and a mixed evangelism. Compare one of the Ultra, or one of the similar Citra-Atlantic displays with the Sermon on the Mount, or with some Pauline exhortation, and say how much of spirit or substance they have in common. Some folk seem to believe that Abraham was called, the Israelites brought out from Mizraim, and assembled to hear awful words and receive noble institutions at the Mount of God, that the Spirit descended on the prophets, the Filial Economy was finally given, and the apostolic mind and tongue—that all might at last culminate in—what? hot declamation, productive of dark and trembling terror, or a soft whine, leading to exclusive self-complacency and sugary expectation? Patience, devout and loving

soul! Quietly hope, wait and labor for better things. Thy brightest visions shall one day be made real, the spurious yield to the genuine, and the world hear and receive a Gospel congruous with Scripture, worthy of God, healthful for man.

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CHAPELTOWN; or, the FELLOW STUDENTS. By an English Congregational Minister. London: Ward & Co.

THIS tale has evidently been written by a man well acquainted with the working of English Independency. It describes the careers of three fellow students; of whom, one, fluent and popular, is, though godly, too fond of applause; another presents a Teutonic theory of Christianity, learnt from Schleiermacher, in an Anglo-German garb, unintelligible to the farming and shopkeeping intellect; the third has a pure aim and a wise method, but is somewhat Pharisaic. The first obtains at the outset a showy "settlement" with a large salary, but breaks down after a while. The second cannot "settle" at all in the usual way, and is driven to answering advertisements, one of which introduces him to a small, but in their own estimation, select, audience in London. The third accepts an invitation from some plain people in the country, where, after brief but successful labor, he dies of consumption. His two friends, however, learn the lessons from his short and wise ministry and fitting deathbed, each where his error lay and how to abandon it, and forthwith recommence their work, under new and better auspices; purified, the one from unpractical mysticism and pointless wordiness, and the other from self. Such is the outline. In the filling up, there is much depicting of human nature, in the various aspects presented by Dissent. The spirit of the book is good, and the manner lively and charming. In our judgment, the objections to which some tales of this sort are liable have little or no application here. We should like to see "Chapeltown" widely circulated, believing it fitted to do good service amongst the worthy inhabitants of that famous borough.

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THE POETICAL WORKS OF SIR WALTER SCOTT, with Memoir and Critical Dissertation. By the Rev. GEORGE GILFILLAN. Three Volumes. Edinburgh: James Nichol.

It affords us sincere pleasure to note the progress of Gilfillan's series of British Poets. The readers of the "Homilist" will remember that, as they have successively appeared, the volumes have been commended, for the general judiciousness of selection, the general exercise of editorial ability, their attractive appearance, and their unsurpassed cheapness. Although, in some quarters, it may be thought a proof of



poetic taste to disparage the poetry of Sir Walter Scott, we confess to sincere enjoyment of the bracing objectivity of his writing—especially agreeable after the introspective lucubrations of the turn-down-collar school—the vigorous inspiration, which is yet subject to the restraints and boundaries of art, the living and elegant pictures of his romantic fancy, and his impetuous but not lawless versification. The first of these volumes contain the two old favorites, the Lay of the Last Minstrel and the Lady of the Lake; the second, Marmion and the Vision of Don Roderick; and the third, Rokeby and the Lord of the Isles. We rejoice in Mr. Gilfillan's prosperous continuance in so useful a career.

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THE LONDON PULPIT. By J. EWING RITCHIE. Second Edition; revised, corrected, and enlarged. London: William Tweedie.

GRANT, GILFILLAN, HOOD, and RITCHIE have, at different times, undertaken the very delicate work of estimating and portraying the popular living preachers of the age. The general acceptability of this species of labor admits of no question; for mankind, the world over, is fond of gossip; but the good taste and righteousness of the work are points not very obvious to the more thoughtful and judicious. We have ourselves always considered it a work of superfluity thus to portray "popular preachers;" for popular preachers are only thus honored. Your very popular preacher, generally, requires no one to describe him or to make him known. In some half-dozen discourses he shows the structure, the furniture, and the complexion of his entire mental and moral self. The whole man is out for ever in a few manifestations. The whole mine is exhausted, there is no more ore to search out; the tree is fully developed, you need not look for another branch or leaf. We should therefore recommend scribes who have a taste and a skill for this kind of work to direct their attention to preachers unknown to fame. There are many preachers even in our rural districts worth knowing; men of profound thought, of high culture, of moral independency; men that will never be popular because they *teach*, and because they are too regal in spirit to condescend to the miserable "claptraps," by which popularity is generally reached in the pulpit. We should hail honest sketches of such men. Of course the judgment which is pronounced in such books must always be determined by the capacity of the writer. If the author is a small man, he, of course, will see wonderful greatness in men a little larger than himself; if otherwise, he will see greatness only in those who tower to a higher altitude. A blade, which is nothing to the lion, is a universe to the insect; all greatness is relative. It is therefore no compliment to be considered great by some

men. The work before us, we consider, in general, discriminating in observation, just in verdict, lofty in its ideal of pulpit excellence, and thoroughly interesting in style.

As a specimen, we subjoin part of a sketch, which it furnishes of one, who, in these last days, has put himself up like Simon Magus, as the "Great Power of God," speaking "great swelling words of vanity." The extract illustrates the Divine maxim, "That with what measure we mete, it shall be measured to us again." The extract is as follows:—

"Dr. Campbell is fluent in pen, meagre in attainment, seemingly master of no one subject, yet writing vehemently on all. The Doctor is precisely the man to give the law to that low class of readers more or less present in all religious denominations. It is easy to see what he is, and what he is not. He is not an accomplished orator. He is not a man of learning, for learning softens the manners. He is not a man of lofty grasp of thought, for he has never said a word, or written a line, that is not narrow, and sectarian, and one-sided. But he is hard, energetic, confident, loud in voice, and boisterous in manner; as unabashed as the Duke of York's monument in Waterloo Place.

"In the pulpit he has it all his own way. You cannot contradict him. You cannot even intimate dissent; and he harangues with the air of a judge. He takes a text and preaches from it. The divisions of the sermon are the sentences of the text, and he talks in the most desultory manner imaginable. The oratory belongs to the deadly-lively school, and consists of mild common-places, pumped out with a ferocity reminding one of the stern Puritans of the olden time. His voice is husky, and, at times, inaudible; his manner, bad. Sheridan had a bad voice, so had Fox, so had Burke; but these men were orators, nevertheless. Dr. Campbell is not one, and never was one. You have talk without effect; action without progress; words without thought. The real truth is, Dr. Campbell is one of the failures of the age.

"The last time I heard the Doctor he was preaching about the Chinese. He told us, what most of us knew well before, that China was a very large country, that it had a wall eighteen hundred miles long, that Confucius lived three or four hundred years before Christ; but there was one thing he did not tell us—that the Chinese call a man of talk, and swagger, and rhodomontade, a paper tiger. But perhaps the Doctor was wise, as comparisons are odious. After all, that such a man, with his fulsome eulogies and violent invective, should have come to be a power, is a melancholy fact—a fact indicating that Dissent will have to undergo a very formidable purifying process before men of taste, and intellect, and learning will be found willing to join its ranks."

SERMONS PREACHED AT TRINITY CHAPEL, Brighton. By the late Rev. FREDERICK W. ROBERTSON, M.A. Third Series. Second Edition. London: Smith and Elder.

THE first and second series of these sermons we noticed in the "Homilist" a few months ago. The high approbation we expressed of the author then is confirmed by this volume. Of course we do not endorse all the author's opinions, but his free, high-minded, suggestive, cultured, and profoundly religious mind delight us greatly. The following extract from one of his sermons in relation to the *Religious Newspaper Press* will be seen to be applicable to some of the so-called religious papers of the present day.

"Let any man cast his eye over the pages of this portion of the press—it matters little to which party the newspaper or the journal may belong—he will be startled to find the characters of those whom he has most deeply revered, whose hearts he knows, whose integrity and life are above suspicion, held up to scorn and hatred; the organ of one party is established against the organ of another, and it is the recognised office of each to point out with microscopic care the names of those whose views are to be shunned; and in order that these may be the more shrunk from, the characters of those who hold such opinions are traduced and vilified. There is no personality too mean—there is no insinuation too audacious or too false for the recklessness of these daring slanderers. I do not like to use the expression, lest it should appear to be merely one of theatrical vehemence; but I say it in all seriousness, adopting the inspired language of the Bible, and using it advisedly and with accurate meaning, the spirit which guides the 'religious press' of this country, which dictates those personalities, which prevents controversialists from seeing what is good in their opponents, which attributes low motives to account for excellent lives, and teaches men whom to suspect, and shun, rather than point out where it is possible to admire and love—is a spirit 'set on fire of hell.'"

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INDEPENDENCY: Who the Independents are; What they believe; Recommendations of Independency; Objections answered. By CHAS. WILLS, M.A. London: Jarrold & Sons. This tract is intended to be sold in parcels for gratuitous distribution. In comprehensiveness of thought, in beauty, clearness, and power of utterance, in honesty, unfactiousness and nobleness of spirit, it has no equal on the subject. It does not advocate the independent denomination but develops the independent principle. It should be circulated by thousands. THE DUTIES OF CHURCHES TO THEIR PASTORS. By the Rev. W. ISAACS. A thoughtful, honest discourse, which Churches would do well to read.



# A HOMILY

ON

## Man's Moral Mission in the World.

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“I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved. And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie : though it tarry, wait for it ; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.”—Hab. ii. 1—3.\*

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**W**HEREFORE are we in this world? Here we are the tenants of a magnificent, beautifully furnished, and well-supplied, district of God's glorious creation. We came not here by choice ; we had no voice in the matter, no voice in determining whether we should be or not be,—be here or elsewhere. Manifestly we are not here by chance. There is

\* The life of Habakkuk is wrapt in obscurity. All that we can gather concerning him is, that he lived and prophesied about the time of the Chaldean invasion, that he was a contemporary with Jeremiah ; that most probably he prophesied in Judah during the reign of Jehoiachaz and Jehoiakim ; that this Book is his production, and that the apostle in his letters to the Hebrews, the Romans, and the Galatians, quotes from his writings, and thereby demonstrates their inspiration.

Amidst the terrible and thickening perils to which the prophet and his country were now exposed by the incursion of the Chaldeans, he turns for safety and protection to Him who had ever been the Refuge of His people,—“a present help in time of trouble.” “I will stand,” he says, “upon my watch ;” like “as a sentinel on the walls of a besieged city,” not to mark the approaches of the enemy, nor to look out for deliverance from man ; but to consult the INFINITE ONE,—to seek counsel from Him,—“to see what He will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved.”

an obvious purpose in our existence on this planet. The exquisite fitness of our organization to the scenery and circumstances in which we are placed shows this. But for what purpose did Infinite Wisdom send us here? What is the great work given us to do? This is the problem. We eat and drink, we use our senses and our limbs, as do the lower creatures around us; we buy and sell and get gain; we observe and reason and get knowledge; and yet we have a profound and constant impression, an impression we cannot shake off, that these operations form but a very subordinate part of our mission. The involuntary conclusion of our reason and the dictates of our conscience assure us that we have something far higher and nobler to accomplish. But what? The answer of the Assembly's Catechism is, "To glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever." But this answer involves two questions which admit of much debate—What is it to glorify God? And what is it to enjoy Him?

Perhaps the whole of man's mission as a moral being may be defined as consisting in three things:—*The receiving of communications from the Eternal Mind, The imparting of communications from the Eternal Mind, and, The practical realization of communications from the Eternal Mind.*

We shall use the passage before us to illustrate these three things:—

I. MAN'S MORAL MISSION IN THIS WORLD CONSISTS IN RECEIVING COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE ETERNAL MIND. That is, in doing that which the prophet now resolved to do; "To watch, and see what he will say," &c. That man is constituted for, and required to receive, communications from the Infinite Mind, and that he cannot realize his destiny without this, will appear evident from the following considerations:—

First: *From his nature as a spiritual being.* (1) Man has a native *instinct* for it. His being naturally cries out for the "living God." "O that I knew where I might find Him!" Is not this the prayer of the human heart under all religions,



in all ages and climes? It is only the logic of infidelity that makes a revelation from God appear impossible; the moral sentiment instead of believing in its impossibility, so deeply yearns for it that it accepts the forgeries of impostors in its stead. Like Saul at Endor, the moral heart will resort to the darkest haunts of superstition and imposture for a revelation from the Eternal. The heart expects the Almighty to speak. The soul is as truly made to receive into it, as its breath and life, thoughts from God, as the eye is made to receive the light, as the earth is made to receive the sunshine and the shower. There is a craving in it for Divine utterances. (2) Man has a native *capacity* for it. The human mind can take in ideas from God—ideas of His power, His wisdom, His independency, His truthfulness, His goodness, and His love. You will find ideas about Him either true or false in every human soul. This is one of the distinguishing features of our being. Unlike the lower creatures around us, we can rise to a conception of the great first cause. On the wing of thought we can pass beyond the remotest boundaries of the material universe into the presence of the very "Fountain of life." (3) Man has a native *necessity* for it. There are germs of power and susceptibility within us that can never be quickened and developed without communications from God. The soul without thoughts from the Infinite will be as an eye without light, having the power of receiving wonderful impressions of beauty and grandeur, but dark withal. The earth is filled with germs of every species of life, but they will remain dormant for ever without the solar beam. An intelligent spirit apart from communication with God is a globe without a sun—dark, cold, chaotic, dead. You may as soon think of cultivating the earth without rays from the central orb, as to think of educating the human soul without ideas from the EVER-LASTING.

Man's need of communications from God will appear :—

Secondly : *From his condition as a fallen being.* His spiritual constitution shows that had he continued in a state of innocence he would have required communications from



God. The highest seraphs in glory require such. But, as a *sinner*, man has a deeper and a more special need. As fallen creatures we want answers to various questions. A deep haze has settled on our path of duty. We want to know the way wherein we should walk. The conflicting ethical theories proposed by the world's great sages show that philosophy cannot answer this question. As a sinner, man is oppressed with guilt, he feels that he has offended the Creator, and justly deserves misery without mitigation and without end; and he asks for the way of reconciliation and pardon. "Wherewithal shall I come before the Lord," &c. Neither priests nor sages have been able to solve the problem. As a sinner man is mortal. He ascertains from history that numerous generations lived on the earth before he appeared, and are gone, he follows to the grave friends and relations, he feels the sentence of death in himself, and he looks at the grave with an anxious heart, and asks "If a man die shall he live again?" No satisfactory answer can be given to the question; the reply must come from Him on whose sovereign will all life depends. As a sinner, therefore, communications from God are of infinite moment to man.

Man's need of communications from God will appear:—

Thirdly: *From the purpose of Christ's mediation.* Why did the Son of God descend to this guilty world to suffer poverty, obliquy, degradation, and death? In one word, it was to bring man to God. His Cross is the meeting-point between man and his Maker. It is the great moral magnet by which those who are "afar off" are to be "brought nigh." Ask me why he did this or why he suffered that? and the answer is, that the Lord God may "dwell amongst men." He is a mediator between God and man; His blessed work is to bring the Holy mind of God and the depraved mind of man together in sweet intercourse and intimate friendship. Man's spirit apart from God is a star that has lost its centre, and wandering from its orbit, is going every moment into deeper darkness and hasting to ultimate destruction. The work of Christ is to arrest that wandering

star, bring it back to its orbit, link it to its Divine centre, and cause it through all its future to catch and reflect the influences of eternal truth, rectitude, and bliss.

Man's need of communications from God will appear :—

Fourthly : *From the special manifestations of God for the purpose.* I say special ; for nature, history, reason, heart and conscience are the original and regular organs of communication between the human and Divine. But we have something more than these. We have in this Book, the Bible, extraordinary communications which the great God made to different men in different ages. What is this Volume but a history of God's communications to some men, in order that all men may communicate with Him? Here we find Him in olden times "speaking to the Fathers by the prophets, and in these last days speaking to us by His Son."

Man's need of communications with God will appear :—

Fifthly : *From the general teaching of the Bible.* In this Book men are called to an audience with God. "Come now and let us reason together," &c. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice," &c. In this Book communion with God is not only inculcated as a duty but exhibited as the highest privilege. "In thy presence there is fulness of joy," &c. "Truly our fellowship is with the Father," &c. This Book represents all its good men, the men who are held forth as having most faithfully fulfilled their mission, as men in the habit of intercourse with Heaven.

Sufficient we think has been advanced to show that man's moral mission involves receiving communications from God. But how are Divine communications to be received? Two things are at least necessary, and these things are in the text :—

First : *That we resort to the right scene.* The prophet ascended "his tower." It is not necessary to suppose that the prophet had any particular locality in view; the language is metaphorical. He withdrew from his usual avocations and associations, and retired to some quiet spot, in order "to see what He would say." God is everywhere, and every-

where is He speaking; but you cannot hear Him unless you resort to silence and solitude. Amidst the shouts of worldly pleasure, the din of passions, and the stir and bustle of business, we cannot hear His voice. Moses heard Him in Midian, Ezekiel in the field, Daniel on the banks of the Ulai, and John in Patmos.

Secondly: *That we resort to the right scene in the right spirit.* "I will watch and see," &c. It is of no service to resort to the most favorable scene, unless you take with you the right spirit—the spirit of devout attention and enquiry. If you will go with your spiritual ear open to listen to Him you will hear His voice,—not otherwise. I believe that God makes communications to man *immediately* as well as by means; but in neither way can we receive from Him without the devout spirit of attention. There is a general impression that God has no communication with the soul now but through means; that since the canon of Scripture has been completed all direct communications are ended. I cannot believe this. He is in ever-living contact with souls. This age is as near to Him, as those ages in which the patriarchs, prophets, and apostles lived. The Great Father does not desert His children. How often have good men received thoughts, felt emotions, and been thrown into moods, of a holy character apart altogether from the ordinary means! God speaks to us now in "visions of the night when deep sleep falleth upon man," &c.; but we hear Him not for the want of a right attitude of soul. Love gives new senses to the soul,—new ears and eyes. What is it that makes that mother's head so restless on the pillow, and renders her sleepless during the silent watches of the night? All the other residents in the house are still and calm in the soft arms of repose. It is the faint moaning of an afflicted child that lies in a distant room. No one else hears those faint notes of disease; they are too weak to reach any other ear. Even the nurse on whose arm the dear child is resting its little feverish head hears them not. But the feeblest of them travels into the chamber of the mother, enters not

merely her ear but her heart, and heaves her spirit into surges of anxious thought. Amidst the loudest peals of thunder peradventure she might sleep, but not amidst those faint moans which are inaudible to all besides. What is it that makes that woman's ear so exquisitely quick? It is love. It is so with man and God. Fill man's soul with Divine love and you will find his universe with Divine voices.

II. MAN'S MORAL MISSION IN THIS WORLD CONSISTS IN IMPARTING COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE ETERNAL MIND. The communication which the prophet received he was commanded to make known: "Write the vision and make it plain upon the tables, that he may run that readeth it." From this we may conclude that writing is both an ancient and a divinely sanctioned art. For it we cannot be too thankful. Through writing the past is handed down to us. It gives an imperishable power, a ubiquitous influence to thought. It reflects the institutions and deeds of men and nations long since departed. A true book is a second incarnation of man's self; in it as in a second body he lives and works long after his mortal frame has crumbled to ashes. The press is the most effective organ through which we can reach the past, and one of the mightiest instruments by which we can influence the present and help the future. Writing is as divine an ordinance as preaching:—the prophet was commanded to "write the vision, and to make it plain." Let the characters be bold, let the language be simple, so "that he may run that readeth;" that men in bustle and haste may decipher the meaning.

That we have to impart as well as receive is evident :—

First: *From the tendency of Divine thoughts to express themselves.* Ideas of a religious kind always struggle for utterance,—they cannot well be suppressed. The Divine things which "we have seen and heard" "we cannot but speak." There are certain thoughts which a man may keep secret; they have no connexion with his conscience and social nature; but not so with Divine thoughts: he who has them

will feel "a necessity laid upon him" to *proclaim* them. Like beams of light, their very nature is diffusive.

Secondly: *From the universal adaptation of Divine thoughts.* The thoughts we receive from God are not for a class; they are "for all generations." The communications, for example, which David received and wrote are as suited to us as they were to himself and the generation to which he belonged. Men have thoughts which are only for the initiated; but God's are for the race.

Thirdly: *From the spiritual dependence of man upon man.* Man is as dependent upon his fellow for spiritual blessings as he is for material. He is dependent upon him for his education, his knowledge, and his religious impressions. It is God's plan that man should be the spiritual teacher of man. The world wants the religious thoughts we get from God. They are the only forces that can break its fetters, chase away its darkness, and lift it into true freedom and life.

Fourthly: *From the general teaching of the Bible.* What the prophets and apostles received they taught, what they heard they communicated. What the apostles received from Christ they were commanded to go and preach unto all the world. When "it pleased God, said Paul, to reveal His Son in me, immediately," &c.

Men are giving their thoughts and impressions every day to others; and these exert an influence upon the character and destinies of men that will be only fully known in eternity. None of us can live unto ourselves. In every act we produce a ripple upon the great sea of existence that shall go on in ever-widening circles. Every moment we touch chords that shall vibrate through the ages. Let us then get from God the true thoughts and give them out; let us catch the Divine rays and reflect them, and we shall help to light up the world with the "true light."

III. MAN'S MORAL MISSION CONSISTS IN THE PRACTICAL REALIZATION OF COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE ETERNAL MIND. "Though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely

come; it will not tarry." "For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie." Rest assured, that all He has said shall be accomplished. There is a time afforded for the fulfilment of all God's promissory communications to man. The vision of the prophecy is "yet for an appointed time." In the Divine purpose there is a period fixed for the realization of every Divine promise. That time may seem very remote to us; but "one day with the Lord is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day." However distant it may seem, our duty is to wait in earnest practical faith for it. "It will surely come; it will not tarry." Has He promised that the world shall be reduced to the genial and merciful sovereignty of Christ? It may seem far off to us:—"wait for it." "As the rain cometh down from heaven," &c. "Heaven and earth shall pass away," &c. To live under the practical influence of the truth of all the communications which God makes to us, to embody His word in our life, to work out His doctrines in living characters, to furnish the world with a living exposition of this Book, to become "living epistles of Christ," known and read of all men, this is our mission. Oh, to be ruled in everything, to be moulded in every part, by His communications!—to have His word dwelling in us as the nucleus, around which all our thoughts gather, as a light through which we look at the universe, and in which we pursue our way!

From the whole we learn then, who it is that fulfils his moral mission in this world. Who is it? Not the man who amasses the most wealth and becomes the most secularly influential; not the man who revels most in material luxuries and animal gratifications; not even the man who has risen to the most clear and comprehensive knowledge of the universe, and God. No, but the man whose spiritual eye and ear are open to receive communications from the Eternal; whose soul is ever in a waiting attitude, receiving thoughts from Him, and saying, "How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God!" the man who not only receives but communi-



cates what he receives, either by pen or tongue, or both. For it is the thoughts we get directly from communion with Him which are full of freshness and life, and not the thoughts we excogitate from our own poor brain, or borrow from other men, that give value to our written or our oral discourses. The man, moreover, who not only receives and communicates, but practically realizes and carries out in the spirit and habits of his life, God's revelation, is the man that fulfils his moral mission.

We are here then, brothers, for these three purposes, not for *one*, but for *all*. God is to be everything to us, He is to fill up the whole sphere of our being,—our “all in all.” We are to be His *auditors*, hearing His voice in everything; we are to be His *organ*, conveying to others what He has conveyed to us; we are to be His *representatives*, manifesting Him in every act of our life. All we say and do, our looks and mien are to be rays reflected from the “Father of Lights.”

In conclusion we remark :—

First: *The reasonableness of religion*. What is religion? It is rightly to *receive*, *propagate*, and *develop* communications from the Infinite mind. Is there anything unreasonable in this? Is it not in keeping with the analogy of nature? If there be a great Parent-Spirit of the universe, and if “we are his offspring,” can anything be more reasonable than that we should seek a living fellowship with His mind.

Secondly: *The grandeur of a religious life*. What is sometimes called religion is indeed a despicable thing. The adoption without individual reflection of some narrow creed which leads its votaries to damn all who will not believe the same; often passes, alas! for religion. The narrowness, the intolerance, the bigotry, the selfishness, of many professors and many sects, are hideous and hellish misrepresentations of the true thing. Oh, ye sceptics remember that the conventional religion you denounce is not the religion of God. We loathe it as you. To be religious, is to be a *disciple* of the All-Knowing God. To be truly religious is to be a *minister* of the All-Ruling God. To be religious is to be a *represen-*

tative of the All-Glorious God. Is there anything more grand in conception than this. A religious life is a transcendently glorious life.

Thirdly: *The function of Christianity.* What is the specific design of the Gospel? To qualify man to fulfil his mission on earth. It does this and nothing else can. The greatest of ancient sages felt the need of such help as Christianity offers. "We must" says Socrates, "of necessity wait till some one from Him who careth for us shall come and instruct us how we ought to behave towards God and man." "We cannot" says the illustrious Plato, "know of ourselves what petitions will be pleasing to God, or what worship we should pay to Him; but it is necessary that a lawgiver should be sent from heaven to instruct us." \* \* \* "Oh how greatly do I desire to see that man and who he is!" That SOME ONE for whom Socrates waited, that LAWGIVER whom Plato so devoutly desired to see, has, thank God! come into our world, and we have "seen his glory as of the only begotten of the father, full of grace and truth." He does all, and more, than these renowned sages in the vastness of their aspirations ventured to expect. He transcends their IDEAL TEACHER. In Christianity He supplies all we require to enable us to perform our mission. He provides a medium of intercourse between man and his God. He has furnished a moral "ladder" by which men in the lowest degradation of sin can ascend to God. Human depravity which has created a mighty chasm between man and his Maker, He has bridged over by His sacrifice, and now a free intercourse can be carried on. "THROUGH HIM WE HAVE ACCESS BY ONE SPIRIT UNTO THE FATHER."

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# The Genius of the Gospel.

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ABLE expositions of the Gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities, alluded to by the inspired writers ; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanted amongst us. But the eduction of its **WIDEST** truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach ; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archaeological, geographic, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim ; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of scriptural study, but to reveal its spiritual results.

THIRTY-SEVENTH SECTION. Matt. xii. 22—30.

SUBJECT:—*The Satanic and The Divine.*

ALL the different parts of this paragraph can, we think, be conveniently explained under these four general ideas ;—ideas which are fairly and clearly deducible from the entire passage :—

I. THAT GOD AND SATAN ARE BOTH AT WORK IN CONNECTION WITH MANKIND IN THIS WORLD. “Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb : and he (Christ) healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw.” Here was a man on whom Satan acted, and on whom the Great God, in the person of Christ, acted also. What satanic possession really meant in *those days* has been noticed elsewhere, and is not our question now. We take the case before us as the type of a fact common to human nature in this world ; namely, *that God and Satan are acting upon it* ;—that it is everywhere subject to the agencies of these two Beings.

First: *Humanity is morally possessed of the devil.* If I were asked to exert my ingenuity to discover the best emblem to represent the moral state of the world, I could not do better than take a man deprived of eyes, and the power of speech, his ears sealed, his reason gone, the creature of a wild

fancy, and of fiery and uncontrollable impulses. Just such is the emblem which the New Testament furnishes us in these demoniacs. The world is morally "possessed." I infer this, because I find it everywhere pursuing courses of action, adopting theories, controlled by motives, inspired by passions, inconsistent with its own reason, with its own conscience, and with its own well-being. I infer this, because it is in manifest hostility to the mind and will of its Creator:—in His judgment "every imagination of its heart is evil continually." I infer this, because it is attested by universal experience. The uncivilized has it as a feeling that the Evil One is upon him, the philosopher adopts it as a doctrine, and the saint wrestles and struggles against it as "a law in his members warring against the law of his mind." I infer this, because the Bible teaches it. It teaches us that "the prince of the power of the air worketh in the children of disobedience;" that "the field" of the world is open to him, and that whilst men sleep he is "sowing the tares" of evil and ruin. You pity, or perhaps you stand aghast with horror at, the demoniacs who figure on the page of evangelical history; sometimes blind and dumb, as in the case before us, sometimes raging and furious as wild beasts, tearing their own bodies, haunting the deserts, and dwelling amidst the ghastly tombs. But all this, believe me, is but a faint emblem of the moral influence which Satan has over our world. The world is but a huge moral demoniac. It is spiritually blind, deaf, dumb, mad.

Secondly: *Humanity thus morally possessed of the devil is benevolently acted upon by God.* "He healed him, inasmuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw." God does not leave humanity in this satanic state. Were He to do so the world would become a pandemonium. No! He strives with men: strives by the influences of nature, by the events of history, by the dictates of conscience, by the truths of the Gospel, by the Spirit of Christ. Every act a man does has either the Divine or the satanic character. We are the organs, the agents, the representatives, of one or other of these invisible

powers. Children of the prince of darkness or of the Father of Light we are all. Hell and heaven meet and battle in man.

II. THAT THE EJECTION OF EVIL FROM HUMAN NATURE IS AN INCONTROVERTIBLE PROOF THAT THE ACT IS DIVINE. When the Pharisees heard that Christ had expelled the evil spirit from the man, they said, "This fellow does not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils." But the absurdity, to say nothing at present about the astounding impiety, of the allegation, will appear manifest if we just notice several things in the passage.

First: *The nature of Satan's work.* His work is not to deliver men from evil, but to afflict them with it. The case before us is a specimen of his work upon men in general; it is to make them "blind and dumb." He is a destroyer, not a Saviour. The blindness, deafness, dumbness, and oftentimes madness, which marked these demoniacs, were but illustrations of the effects of Satan upon the souls of men. How he blinds their understandings so that they cannot see the spiritual realities of the spiritual world! How he seals their ears against the voices of Heavenly wisdom! How he takes away their power of speech for God and truth! How he warps their judgment and deranges their understanding, so that in relation to spiritual things they are like madmen! This is the work of Satan upon the soul. He help to eject evil from man,—he aid in casting out devils! No, no, his work is to make men devils. Like begets like the universe through. "The prince of the power of the air" breathes an atmosphere impregnated with the elements of hell.

Secondly: *The impression of the people.* "All the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the Son of David"? that is, Is not this the true Messiah; he of whom it was predicted that He would "open the eyes of the blind?" &c. The impression of all unprejudiced men would be, that God is in the expulsion of evil. We are not disposed to admit that this of itself would be conclusive, for popular impressions

are frequently, perhaps generally, wrong; but taken with other considerations it undoubtedly increases the power of the evidence.

Thirdly: *The reasoning of Christ.* The reasoning of Christ involves an appeal to three things:—(1) To the common sense of men. “And Jesus knew their thoughts and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself cannot stand; and if Satan cast out Satan he is divided against himself, how shall then his kingdom stand?” It is here implied that Satan would not do it. Would a king destroy loyalty in his subjects? Would the head of a family introduce division into the family circle? Would Satan as an intelligent being war against his own interest? Would he aim at the overthrow of his own empire? The power and influence of his empire consist in propagating and strengthening evil; to expel evil, therefore, is to weaken his authority. Is it likely that he will do so? Then as Satan could not do it, Christ asserts that it is *done by some stronger power*. “How can one enter into a strong man’s house and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his goods.” The power of Satan in a depraved man, is strong. The heart of a corrupt person “is a strong man’s house,”—the devil is there. He has taken possession. He has built around it strong defences, he has bolted the doors with more than iron bars. He has got possession and he is strong there. No mortal man can get him out. If ever he is to be expelled it must be by some one who has power to bind the strong man, to spoil his goods, and take possession of the habitation. God only can do this. The reasoning of Christ involves:—(2) An appeal to their professions. There were men amongst the Jews recognised as good men by these Pharisees, who professed to cast out devils. Jesus asks, “by whom do your children”—your disciples, “cast them out?” You believe that they do it by the power of God. Why then should you say that I do it by Beelzebub? The reasoning of Christ:—(3) Appeals to a universal truth. “He that is not



with me is against me, and he that gathereth not scattereth abroad." There is no neutrality in morals; no neutrality in moral principles;—all things are right or wrong. No neutrality in moral actions: they are either good or bad. They may have a good form, and yet be bad. No neutrality in moral positions; all are either on the side of God, or on the side of the devil. No neutrality in moral influence; it is either useful or injurious. *Moral neutrality is impossible.\**

III. THAT NOTWITHSTANDING THE MANIFEST DISTINCTION BETWEEN DIVINE WORKS AND SATANIC, THERE ARE MEN PERVERSE ENOUGH TO CONFOUND THE DIFFERENCE. These Pharisees did so now. They said, "This fellow," &c. There are two great evils which men commit on the question of moral causation:—

First: *Some ascribe bad deeds to God.* The warrior who has rifled cities and slain his thousands appears after his bloody achievements at the altar, to return thanks to that God who has commanded us not to kill, and declared that all wars arise from "the lusts" of the wicked heart. The priest who presumes to stand between God and the people, by his sacerdotal services professing to propitiate Almighty justice, ascribes his crafty deeds to God. The Islam and the Mormonite leaders, who impose upon the credulity of the ignorant, profess to have derived their authority and doctrines from heaven. How much kingly despotism, military slaughter, priestly craft, religious imposture, and international plunder and oppression, are enacted in the sacred name of God.

Secondly: *Some ascribe good deeds to Satan.* These cavilling and malicious men did so:—irritated with jealousy at the impression which Christ's miracle made upon the people, so favorable to His own growing popularity, they said, with contemptuous indignation, "This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils." They could not deny the miracle, it was too patent to all; the only

\* See an excellent sermon of Vinet's, in his "Vital Christianity" on the subject.

plan they had therefore to resist its influence amongst the people was to ascribe it to satanic agency. This they did. They traced a good act to a bad cause, a Divine act to the arch-foe of God. This was a heinous sin. Yet the principle of this has been too common in every age. What is the conduct of those who trace all the good effects which Christianity has produced upon the world, the moral miracles it has achieved amongst the various tribes and nations of the earth to the ingenuity and craft of impostors, and who designate the Bible a "cunningly devised fable"? What, too, is the conduct of those who, alas! abound in all times and lands, who are ever disposed to ascribe good acts to bad motives, and brand as hypocrites the most holy and useful men? Why, such conduct is exactly the same in principle as that which these blaspheming Scribes and Pharisees now committed. Whilst we stand appalled at the enormous wickedness of these men who ascribed the benign miracles of the Son of God to satanic agency, let us remember that the principle of this conduct has ever been rife in the world, and may, peradventure, be even yet in our own deceitful hearts.

Whilst God and Satan are here working on our fallen nature, let us not mistake the agency; let us not confound the working of beings so infinitely dissimilar. I know not which is the greater enormity of the two, to trace earth's crimes to heaven, or earth's virtues to the "evil one;" but both, I know, are common sins. Proud reason! boast no more of thy philosophy. In man depraved, thou art the vassal of a wicked heart, worked to justify a guilty life and hush a crying conscience.

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THIRTY-EIGHTH SECTION. Matt. xii. 31, 32.

SUBJECT:—*The Unpardonable State.*

THE miracle which Jesus had just performed was so manifestly real that His greatest enemies, "the Scribes and the Pharisees," were utterly unable to account for it on any

natural principles. The supernaturalness of the act was incontrovertible. They felt that no mean human power could have achieved it. What then were they to do in order to *maintain* the opposition which they had assumed towards Christ? There was evidently only one course before them, namely, the ascribing of the miracle to satanic agency. If they ascribed it to Divine power then it would be a proof of His Messiahship, and their position would be destroyed. If they were to retain their hostile attitude, therefore, they were "shut up" to this course; and this course they adopted.

In the preceding verses which we noticed in our *last section*, Christ gives a triumphant refutation of that explanation of His miracle which referred it to satanic agency. After this, He adds in these verses a declaration which might well strike the utmost terror into their hearts:—"Wherefore I say unto you all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men," &c.

The overwhelmingly solemn question which now meets us is, What is this sin that seals for ever a man's fate, that places him for ever beyond the pale of forgiveness, that shuts him up for ever beneath the ever-blackening firmament of condemnation? What is the downward step that can never be retraced,—the act starting from an impulse that can never be overcome, but which must gather new hell-ward force for ever?

There are at least two theories deserving notice:\* the one is, that the act was such that the Pharisees, in consequence of the peculiar circumstances in which they stood to Christ, could alone be guilty of it; and the other is that it was such opposition to the spirit of God as all are liable to who reject the offers of mercy through Jesus Christ. The latter seems to me the more probable. (1) Because there is no positive proof that the Pharisees did really commit the sin. Jesus did not say so, nor does His language necessarily

\* Those who wish to see a statement of all the views that have been propounded should consult Knapp's Theology, Section 84.

imply it. Moreover, if they had been guilty of this unpardonable sin, Why did He continue to preach to them? And why on the Cross did He pray for their forgiveness? (2) Because assuming that they committed this sin the latter hypothesis is sufficiently comprehensive to involve their particular act. They wilfully referred Divine phenomena to satanic cause,—they traced the productions of God to the agency of evil. All who state, knowing better, that Christ is an impostor, and that the Bible is a fable, commit in spirit the blasphemous deed of these Pharisees. (3) Because the latter hypothesis agrees with other passages in the New Testament which must be regarded as of general and permanent application. The Bible does certainly teach that man may here arrive at a point in sin when salvation becomes impossible—that the day of grace closes with some before the day of life.\*

Now, although we would not presume to define with precision this *unpardonable state*, yet we think that *some light* may be thrown upon it by the following course of thought:—

I. THAT THE ONLY OBSTRUCTION NOW EXISTING TO THE FORGIVENESS OF MAN ON EARTH IS IMPENITENCY OF HEART. There are three things necessary to the remission of sins.

First: *That the righteous Sovereign should be disposed to pardon.* Forgiveness is the exclusive prerogative of the Supreme Ruler whose laws have been violated and whose authority has been contemned. If, therefore, He is indisposed to the exercise of this Sovereign prerogative, forgiveness must be necessarily unattainable.

Secondly: *That there be a ground honorable to His character and safe to His government on which the pardon can be dispensed.* It is easy to conceive of a sovereign having a disposition to dispense forgiveness to a criminal, and yet having no way of doing so without clouding his justice, weakening the motives to obedience, and endangering the order of his kingdom.

\* See Heb. vi. 4—6; Heb. x. 29; 1 John, v. 16; 2 Peter, ii. 22.

Thirdly: *That there should be a proper state of mind in the criminal for the reception of the pardon.* Let the sovereign be disposed to pardon, let him also have an honorable way in which to dispense it, yet if the disposition of the criminal remains the same as that which prompted the crime, there would be the strongest reason to withhold the remission.

Now as we can only conceive of these three obstructions to human forgiveness, the question is which of these exist? Is it the first? Is the Infinite Sovereign indisposed to the exercise of pardoning mercy? Listen to His own declaration: "Let the wicked forsake His way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God for he will ABUNDANTLY pardon." Is it the second? Listen again. "The blood of Jesus Christ, his son, cleanseth us from all sin." "He is a propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." "He is able to save to the uttermost all them that come unto God through him." The last, then, is the only alternative, namely, the state of the sinner's heart. Men are not forgiven because they do not repent. "Repentance and remission of sins" go together. "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." This is no *arbitrary* condition. Pardon without repentance would be a license to further crime, would be worthless to the individual himself, and an injury to the universe. Let the world repent, and from the throne of God there will go forth the pardoning words of love, "thy sins which are many are all forgiven."

II. THAT FAITH IN CHRIST AS THE INFALLIBLE REVEALER OF THE ALMIGHTY SOVEREIGN IS ESSENTIAL TO THE REMOVAL OF THIS IMPENITENCY OF HEART.

This will appear from two facts:—

First: *That a conviction of God's love towards the impenitent is indispensable.* How can repentance towards God be produced? From the laws of our spiritual nature, it is re-

quired that to awaken new emotions you must produce new beliefs. If you change a man's faith in relation to any object, you change the whole character and current of his feelings, in relation to that object. Get faith that the man you hate is estimable in character, generous in sympathy, and benevolent in purpose towards you, and forthwith your hatred gives place to love. From the constitution of our nature, a deep impression of the fact that He whose laws we have transgressed and whose authority we have opposed, loves us with infinite depth and tenderness is necessary to break the impenitent heart into gracious affections towards Him. And this, be it observed, is repentance. Mere moral regret, awakened by a revelation of law is not evangelical penitence;—Judas had this—hell has this,—but a change in the controlling dispositions and affections of the heart towards God. Now nothing can in the nature of the case produce this but a conviction of God's love towards us.

Secondly: *That faith in Christ as the infallible revealer of God is essential to this conviction.* Where do we learn that God loves man in his sinful state. Does nature reveal it? No, nature reveals the general goodness of God. Nature says nothing as to God's feelings towards the sinner. The volume of Nature was published before the fall. It is Christ that teaches it. He teaches that His love and tenderness are but the effects and images of God's love; that His mission is the expression and proof of God's love; that because God loved the world, He sent Him—His only begotten Son, that "whosoever believeth in Him might not perish but have everlasting life." It may be said that the prophets and the apostles teach the same. The reply is, that the former learnt it from the "Spirit of Christ that was in them," and the latter directly from His own teaching. The conviction that God loves the sinner is derived from Christ exclusively.

But is He the infallible revealer of God? if not I cannot accept His teaching on the subject. Nay, if not I have every reason to reject it. For He having revealed Himself as such, is the greatest of impostors, and therefore not to be trusted.



Hence faith in Him as the infallible revealer of God is indispensable to give us that conviction of Divine love which is necessary to produce that genuine penitence without which there can be no forgiveness.

III. THAT ALL THE EVIDENCE NECESSARY TO THIS FAITH IN CHRIST AS THE INFALLIBLE REVEALER OF GOD MUST BE REGARDED AS FURNISHED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT. The evidence in favor of the fact that Christ is the infallible revealer of God is drawn from at least three sources:—

First: *From His own character, doctrines, and works.* His character in every part commends itself to our moral intuitions, answers to our ideal of moral excellence and glory. His doctrines are so consonant with our reason, so true to our experience, and so adapted to our sense of the sublime, that we feel that He was a teacher sent from God. His miracles are so uniformly merciful, so profoundly significant, and so overwhelmingly grand, that we feel that no one could do such works unless God were with Him.

Secondly: *From the remarkable relation of all the sacred writers to Him.* They all, or nearly all, refer to Him. Those who lived ages before Him, those who were His contemporaries, and those who lived after Him, for the most part, refer to Him as their principal subject. And although many of them lived in different climes and ages, all their statements about Christ agree with what He actually was. He actualized in his own being and history the ideas of all; took up their conceptions, embodied them, drew them out in living characters, and thus fulfilled “the law and the prophets.” This remarkable congruity is mighty evidence.

Thirdly: *From the effects which His system has produced upon the world.* Its influence has been wide, purifying, and religious; has always been to turn men to God—to assimilate them to Christ. The history of Christianity in the world is an incontrovertible evidence of its Divinity.

Now is not the Spirit of God to be regarded as the Author of this threefold description of evidence? The character,

doctrines, and worth of Christ are referred to the SPIRIT, which was given to Him "without measure." The writings of prophets and apostles are to be ascribed to that Spirit, who inspired them to write, moving them thereto. The triumphs of the Gospel in the world are to be ascribed to that Spirit, without whose aid Paul may plant and Apollos water, but all would be in vain. Every event, every statement, every consideration that serve to convince that Christ is the infallible revealer of God must be ascribed to the Divine Spirit. It is one of His special functions to CONVINCE; and He supplies and arranges all the necessary evidence for the work.

IV. THAT A WILFUL REJECTION OF THIS EVIDENCE IS SUCH A TREATMENT OF THE SPIRIT AS MUST IN THE NATURE OF THE CASE EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF FORGIVENESS. This follows as a necessary inference from the three former propositions. If penitence is necessary to forgiveness, if a conviction of Divine love is necessary to penitence, if faith in Christ as the infallible revealer of Divine love is necessary to this conviction, if the evidence to produce this conviction is the work of the Spirit, then it follows as a necessity that a wilful rejection of this evidence is such a treatment of the Spirit as must in the nature of the case exclude the possibility of forgiveness. He that trifles with the evidence trifles with the Spirit; he that resists the evidence resists the Spirit; he that contemns the evidence contemns the Spirit. The man that continues to do this can never be forgiven in this world or the world to come.

Blasphemy means disrespect, irreverence, calumny, indignity. The greatest sin you can commit against a man is to blaspheme him, to traduce his character, to injure his reputation, to treat him with contempt. The man that steals your reputation is of all felons the greatest; and yet this felony goes generally unpunished, and is too often practised, even in the so-called religious circles and journals. And as this blasphemy or calumny is the greatest sin you can commit

against man, so it is the greatest sin you can commit against the Spirit.

It is the climax of iniquity. A lower state of depravity is not conceivable than that state in which a man scorns the most sacred things and speaks contemptuously of the most glorious manifestations of God. Such a state of mind is in other places represented as hopeless. "He that reproveth a scorner getteth to himself shame." "Reprove not a scorner lest he hate thee." "A scorner seeketh wisdom and findeth it not." "Judgments are prepared for the scorner." "He scorneth the scorner, but giveth grace to the humble."

We have approached I think near enough this unpardonable sin. There must, of course, be some one last act of sin which brings man into this terrible condition; the act which takes the soul over the probationary line of hope, that seals its fate for ever. I would not presume to pronounce what that precise act is, I would not have it distinctly and unmistakably defined.

The Bible leaves a haziness over it, and I, for one, would not have that haziness removed. There are rocks in the ocean, I have been told, well known to the mariner, covered with everlasting mists, so that their outlines are never seen. The sailor knows their position and steers clear of the danger. This sin is one of those rocks in the sea of our probationary life. There is a mysterious mist enfolding it. Still we know its whereabouts. Under the light of Divine Revelation we can see sometimes its dark shadow sleeping on the wave. We know in what moral direction it lies. All sinners are moving about it and gradually approaching it. It is not far from that sceptic who wilfully shut his eyes to evidence,—from that scorner that sneers at the sacred,—from that Gospel-hearer who is growing more and more unimpressible every sabbath,—from that backslider who having once "tasted the good word of life and the powers of the world to come," continues to "fall away." Sceptic, scorner, Gospel-hardened, backslider, take care! your barque is sailing in the direction of that

fatal rock,—you cannot see it, it is mantled in mists :—take care ! you are within its shadow !

“Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man it shall be forgiven him ; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.” The men “who denied” Christ, “the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted” to them in His stead, and who killed the Prince of Life, had “repentance and remission of sins” preached to them on the day of Pentecost, and thousands of them received the blessings. Their heinous sins against Christ were forgiven. But such forgiveness is here denied to those who so treat the Holy Ghost. There is no hope for such, either here or hereafter ;—“in this world or in the world to come.” Make this blessed Book then your chart to guide you over the ocean of life. There is no safety only as you move according to its light

“Most wondrous Book ! bright candle of the Lord !

Star of Eternity ! the only star

By which the barque of man could navigate

The sea of life, and gain the coast of bliss

Securely ; only star which rose on Time,

And on its dark and troubled billows still,

As generation, drifting swiftly by,

Succeeded generation, threw a ray

Of Heaven’s own light, and to the hills of God—

The everlasting hills—pointed the sinner’s eye.”

POLLOK.

THIRTY-NINTH SECTION. Matt. xii. 36, 37.

SUBJECT :—*The Morality of Language.*

HUMAN language is looked upon in different aspects by different men. Some looked upon it *grammatically*, trace its etymology and arrange its words and sentences according to

the conventional rules of speech :—some look at it *logically*, study it in its relation to the laws of human reasoning :—some look upon it *philosophically*, view it in its relation to the nature of the things it is intended to represent :—and some look upon it *morally*, contemplate it in its relation to the laws of conscience and God. *Grammatical* language is mere conformity to acknowledged rules of speech ; *logical* language is conformity to recognized principles of reasoning ; *philosophical* language is conformity with the order of nature ; *moral* language is conformity with the moral law of God. There is a regular gradation in the importance of these aspects of language. The first is of the least importance, the second next, and the third next, and the last the most important of all. It is strange and sad to see that the amount of attention which men pay to these aspects is in the inverse ratio of their importance. The first, the least important, is the most attended to, the second next, the third next, and the last, the most important of all, almost entirely neglected. In the department of speech we have more grammarians than logicians, more logicians than philosophers, more philosophers than honest saints. It is to this moral aspect of language that Jesus now calls our attention. *We have here the heinous enormity of some language, the true function of all language, the only method of reforming corrupt language, and the responsibility associated even with the most trifling language.*

I. THE HEINOUS ENORMITY OF SOME LANGUAGE. Some “speak against the Son of God,” and “some against the Holy Ghost.” We have already spoken about the danger of such conduct ; we have only now to speak of its moral turpitude. Such language involves :—

First : *The grossest injustice.* The language of strong invective and denunciation against some men may be, to some extent, justified by their unrighteous principles and unworthy conduct. But not so here. What fault can any find in the Son of God, or in the Holy Ghost ? Secondly : *The foulest*

*ingratitude.* What have the Son of God and the Holy Ghost done for us in our salvation? The suggestion of the question is enough. Thirdly: *The greatest profanity.* Against whom are they speaking? To speak against a human sovereign is sometimes a capital offence. But this is against the Eternal Prince of the Universe. Fourthly: *The maddest hostility.* When you hear a man speak against another, you may be sure that there is strong feeling of malignity at the root. We deal tenderly with the characters of those we love. We speak *for* them when accused, to the utmost of our power. When men, therefore, are found "speaking against the Son," and "against the Holy Ghost," you may be sure that there is a profound feeling of hostility at the root. But how mad, how irrational is the feeling! There is no *reason* for such enmity; on the contrary there is every conceivable reason against it. *Right* and *expediency* are equally against it.

How heinous then is language when thus used against God! And yet, alas! it is not uncommon. You have it from the pen of the infidel in treatises, poems, orations; and from the blasphemous lips of the scoffer and profane.

II. THE TRUE FUNCTION OF ALL LANGUAGE. "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good, or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit." The idea suggested is, that language is to be to the real heart of man, what fruit is to the tree, *the exact expression of itself.* The fruit embodies and represents the very essence and heart of the tree. Even so should language. The function of words is faithfully to represent the soul; they should be to man's inner being what the beam is to the sun, the fragrance to the flower, the stream to the fountain, the fruit to the tree;—faithful exponents of itself.

If this is the true function of language there are two sad and general perversions of it.

First: *When words are used without meaning.* "Words are but air," is a current expression, and too often is truthfully applicable to the utterances of men. In the idle chat of



gossip, the formal expressions of etiquette, the vapid compliments of society, you have words that do not stand for any real sentiments in the soul. As a rule, perhaps, where you have the most talk you have the least soul, the most profession the least principle, the most loquacity the least spiritual property and power. Language is perverted:—

Secondly : *When words are used to misrepresent.* They are frequently so used. They are employed not to reveal, but to conceal, what is within ; they are masks to misrepresent the face of the heart. Such words as dishonest tradesmen use in striking their bargains, the seducer in rifling the virtue of his victim, the ambitious candidate in winning the suffrages of the people. The world truly is full of such perversion.

The fact is, that so depraved is society that it cannot afford to be sincere, cannot afford to show its real heart in its language. It feels compelled to use the divine faculty of speech, one of the choicest gifts of Heaven, to misrepresent the true state of its mind. What a change would come over society at once were no words used but what were “the fruit” of the heart ! Let every man in England to-morrow begin to show his real sentiments and feelings in his language, let every word be the true mirror of the soul, and English society would be shaken to its foundation. What contracts founded in deception would dissolve ! What friendships based upon false professions would be ruptured ! Souls which had mingled together in social intercourse, when they came by faithful speech to see each other face to face, would start asunder with mutual repulsion, and rush away with instinctive horror and indignation.

How great then is the depravity of our world that we are bound to throw over it the drapery of falsehood ! We have reached such a state that there seems to be a felt necessity for lying ;—we are either afraid or ashamed to use our words as the sun uses its beams, to show its nature.

III. THE ONLY METHOD OF REFORMING CORRUPT LANGUAGE. “O generation of vipers how can ye, being evil,

“speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth evil things.” What treasures are in the heart! What unbounded productiveness of thought, feeling, and action! The inference of Jesus from this is,—“make the tree good and his fruit good.” The Scribes and Pharisees spoke blasphemously, because their hearts were bad. They were true to their hearts: if they had spoken otherwise they would have spoken hypocritically. Therefore, reformation of language must be preceded by reformation of heart.

This will appear further evident if we consider the elements of correct moral language. These elements we deem to be *sincerity* and *purity*. By *sincerity* we mean the strict correspondence of the language with the sentiments of the heart; and by *purity* we mean the strict correspondence of those sentiments with the principles of everlasting right. Sincerity without purity, were it possible, would be of no moral worth. But sincerity of expression without purity of sentiment seems to us, as we have already intimated, all but socially impossible. A corrupt man is both ashamed and afraid to expose the real state of his heart to his fellow men. But let the sentiments be pure, let the passions be chaste, let the thoughts be generous, let the intentions be honorable, let the principles be righteous; and then instead of there being any motive to insincerity of language, there will be all the incentives to the utmost faithfulness of expression.

The condition then required for correct moral language is, what Jesus here teaches, purity of heart. For “How can ye being evil speak good things?” Unless the fountain is purified, the stream will ever be tainted; unless the tree be made good, the sap that lies in the root will give a tinge to the foliage and a taste to the fruit. Would we then have a correct language? Would we have the kind of language amongst men which the Bible enjoins?—Speech “seasoned with salt, ministering grace unto the hearers;”—“pleasant

words which are as a honey-comb, sweet to the soul and health to the bones ;"—a tongue amongst the people which shall be as "choice silver" and "a tree of life?" Would we have this blessed state of speech? we must struggle to produce that moral regeneration which Jesus so constantly and earnestly enforces. The "cup" and "platter" must be cleansed "within ;" the people must have "a new heart and a right spirit ;" they must be "renewed in the spirit of their minds;" sinners must "cleanse their hands" and the "double-minded" must "purify their hearts;" the heart of humanity must be "cleansed by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost."

IV. THE RESPONSIBILITY ASSOCIATED EVEN WITH THE MOST TRIFLING LANGUAGE. "I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." The Pharisees might have imagined that as they had but spoken, and had perpetrated no real act of enormity, no guilt was contracted. Christ disabuses them of such an impression, by assuring them "That every idle word," &c. Every idle word :—not merely the profane and impious language of the scoffer and blasphemer, but every *idle* word :—words that have little or no meaning ; the most airy words of wit and humor spoke in jest not to delude or pain, but simply to please. "Every idle word," &c. "For by thy words thou shalt be justified and by thy words shalt thou be condemned."

There are three considerations which may serve to show us the responsibility that attaches to idle words :—their *reactive force*,—their *social influence*,—their *Divine recognition*.

First : *Their reactive force*. So constituted are we that our expressions, every one of them, must have a reflex influence. "Those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart, and *they defile the man*." The man who indulges in idle and frivolous talk damages his own mental faculties and moral sense thereby. In such speech there is

no demand for the reflective powers, and they become impotent; there is no development of the sentiments of truth—benevolence, and religion, the very stamina of our moral nature—and they become more and more inoperative and dead. In idle talk the soul in every way is injured; its rich soil, capable of producing trees of knowledge and of life, is wasted in flowery but noxious weeds. Whatever we do that is unworthy of our nature damages our own powers and interests.

Secondly: *The social influence.* Science affirms that every movement in the material creation propagates an influence to the remotest planet in the universe. Be this as it may, it seems morally certain that every word spoken on the ear will have an influence lasting as eternity. The words we address to men are written not on parchment, marble, or brass, which time can efface, but on the indestructible pages of the soul. Everything written on the imperishable soul is imperishable. All the words that have ever been addressed to you by men long since departed are written on the book of your memory, and will be unsealed at the day of judgment, and spread out in the full beams of Eternal knowledge.

Thirdly: *The Divine recognition.* The Great Judge knows every word we have spoken. Not only “the hard speeches” which ungodly men have spoken against Him, will He bring into judgment, but also “every secret thing.” “Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee.”

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# Germ of Thought.

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SUBJECT:—*The Philosophy of Conversion.*

“Being renewed in the spirit of your minds.”—Eph. iv. 23.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Seventy-sixth.

JUST as the principle of *atonement* lies at the foundation of evangelic *theory*, so the gracious work or change called *conversion*, is the beginning of all *experimental* religion. Here is the core of the evangelic creed, and the germ of *Christian* morality. Atonement as a theory, or as an accomplished fact, renders conversion *possible*:—conversion is the practical counterpart of atonement, and the commencement of actual religious experience. We cannot be religious till we are converted; we cannot, consequently, inherit any of the present or future blessings of the evangelic covenant until this change has taken place in the soul. We need add no further remarks to exhibit its essential importance.

Conversion is a subject of which the generality of people have but very confused and defective conceptions. Everyone, perhaps, has *some* idea of what it is; and even among unconverted men, the notion of it may not be so *false* as indistinct and imperfect. Every converted man *knows* what it is;—he has that idea of it which is derived from experience, and to which we give the name of knowledge. But men may be the subjects of many feelings and operations of mind which they cannot analyze and describe;—their minds may have undergone the *change*, but not the study and discipline which are necessary to enable them to distinguish the elements of a complex experience.

We hold the doctrine of a true, radical, Divine regeneration of the soul. We have no philosophical reserve here. The work is unique; it is alone amongst all the experiences

of man; there is nothing else like it known to humanity. It is not merely the natural moral influence of truth upon the faculties and affections—it is the retouching of the human soul by the very power which originally inspired its natural life. It begins in the knowledge of certain truths. These truths are responded to, and confirmed by, all the feelings and experience of man;—all the darkness, the forebodings, the intuitions, the necessities and aspirations of the mind and soul. But these truths are, for the most part, undiscovered till clearly enunciated by Divine revelation; and their moral influence is totally unknown to the affections till they are directly applied by the vitalizing power of the Holy Spirit.

On the *possibility* of an immediate Divine operation upon the mind of man, it is not necessary for us to dwell; our subject on the present occasion is, but a very limited one. What we aim at is, to assist in attaining a distinct conception of *what conversion is*, considered as an internal change. We confine ourselves to a few remarks on the character and precise extent of this change. It is the mutual and moral philosophy of conversion which we would understand.

We observe then :—

I. THAT CONVERSION, THOUGH A SUPERNATURAL WORK, IS NOT A MIRACULOUS CHANGE. Miracles are immediate acts of Divine power, and must from their very design, be comparatively rare; else, ceasing to be extraordinary, they would cease to prove Divine commission. This being the special design of miraculous operations, there must be some palpable distinction between those displays of power which constitute the credentials of revelation, and such exercises of gracious influence as are put forth in the conversion of the soul.

What then is that distinction? And—

*What is the strict definition of a miracle?* Supernatural events may be described as of two kinds—either *miraculous* or simply *supernatural*. All miraculous phenomena are included in the supernatural. But there are many super-



natural operations and effects which are not miraculous. Miracles, again, may be distinguished into two classes. One class consists of effects which *might* have been produced by the use of natural means, (such as the cure of some diseases) but these effects being wrought *without employing the natural means of cure*, become miraculous. Another class of miracles are such events as could never have been brought about by the use of any natural means whatever. To this class belong the healing of diseases naturally *incurable*, the raising of the dead, and some forms of inspiration. Of the supernatural operations and effects not to be designated miraculous, we may name certain forms of inspiration—the operations of Providential overrule, and the gracious influences of the Divine Spirit in the regeneration of the human soul. Now the great question is, how do we distinguish results which we term miraculous, from those which we designate simply supernatural? Whenever supernatural power brings about an event, or produces an effect by *super-seding*, or *setting aside* such natural means as *might* have been employed, or, when it produces results which *no natural means could* have produced, then the result is *miraculous*. But whenever Divine power takes up natural, or established modes of operation to accomplish the work, then the result is simply supernatural. These distinctions might be variously illustrated, but a few brief remarks must dispose of this part of our subject.

Respecting the first class of miracles, it is obviously *possible* that the eyes of the blind might have been opened, and the feet of the lame made strong, by ordinary means. But when Peter commanded the lame man to rise up and walk, there was evidently a miracle performed; for we know that, in an ordinary way, such an effect could not have been produced without the use of means which were not employed in this case;—and it is the absence of natural means which constitutes the thing miraculous.

As instances of the second class of miracles, such as no natural causes could, by any known modes of operation, pro-

duce, we may mention the cure of leprosy, the raising of Lazarus, and some forms of prophetic inspiration. But inspiration, although always supernatural, is not always a miracle, because inspired communications are sometimes made without disturbing or suspending the established laws of mind. Prophecy comes, in some instances only, under the designation of miracle. When the inspired is no longer what may be called *self-intelligible*—when the Divine *afflatus* has overpowered the mind, and the mastery of the prophet's own consciousness is lost, this being a supernatural communication made in a way which supersedes the laws under which the mental faculties usually operate, is miraculous. When inspired predictions or injunctions are suggested to the mind of the writer without breaking in upon the ordinary laws of conscious exercise, then the phenomenon is not miraculous; it is only a supernatural result wrought in a natural way, or at least, according to natural law.

Similar remarks apply to the operations of providential overrule. In the processes of providential government, the Divine Ruler takes up natural *modes* of working, although supernatural *causes* are often *added* to the natural, and operates in subjection to the established laws of mental and physical change. This explains that profound impression which, at so many times in life, strikes the devout observer of providence with a sense of superhuman presence and control; while yet everything seems to come about according to the natural order of things. And this is one of the forms of the supernatural, but not miraculous, operation of Almighty power.

These remarks apply also to the gracious operations of the Spirit of God upon the soul of man, which are all carried on without forcibly disturbing the established laws of mind. We have said that when *the power alone*, and not *the mode of its exercise*, is different to the common course of natural operation, then the change is *simply supernatural*; and thus it is that *conversion*, though a supernatural work, is not to be classed with miracles. The *source* and *essential character*

of that influence by which conversion is effected, as well as the *results* which flow from it, are extranatural; but the mind being left free from any *irresistible* supernatural constraint, they are not *miraculous*.

We observe then :—

II. THAT CONVERSION LEAVES THE CONSTITUTIONAL FACULTIES OF MAN JUST WHAT THEY WERE BEFORE THE CHANGE. They will be neither more nor fewer in *number*; and, what is to be more particularly noted here, they will remain *unchanged in themselves*. The change will only be in the *spirit or direction of their operation and the objects upon which they are exercised*. This will require some little explanation in order to guard against serious misapprehension. It may be necessary just to consider for a moment what is meant by the *constitutional faculties* of man. We find the human mind to have a certain fixed and definite constitution. We all have some idea of what we mean by the constitution of human nature. We know that the phrase does not stand to describe any merely passing or accidental *state or experience* of the mind—something which may or may not exist at any particular moment. It stands for, and describes, that which is abiding—that which makes and distinguishes men as a *sentient, rational, and moral* being.

What, then, is this fixed constitution? What constitutes it? It must, evidently, be something very simple, something quite elementary, original, and essential in its nature. Some say that it consists of certain passions, sentiments, and powers. But no *actual states* of passion, sentiment, or reflection can be said to enter into the constitution of man; but simply a number of *faculties*, or, in other words, merely *capabilities* of thought, and *susceptibilities* of sentiment. Man is capable of thought, but the capability alone, and not the thought, can be said to be a part of his standing constitution. He is also capable of loving and hating, but it is neither love nor hatred that enters into his constitution, but only the *capability* of loving and hating. No particular states of sen-

sation, perception, reasoning, or moral impression can be said to make up the human constitution, but merely the capability of such states or exercises. Now it will at once appear that if this set of capabilities be affected—if any of them were lost by the fall—then man must be constitutionally and essentially another being. If, for instance, his susceptibility of moral impression had been lost, this would have affected his responsibility. Our views of conversion will very much depend upon what are our views of the fall and its consequences: for, conversion is a *recovery*. When the work of regeneration is completed man is recovered to holiness. Now the fall did not destroy any of the constitutional faculties or susceptibilities of man. Man had, before his fall, the power or capability of perceiving the objects of sense; he was capable of apprehending truth, and deducing conclusions from first principles. He possessed the capability of loving, hating, fearing, rejoicing, and the susceptibility of moral impression. The whole apparatus of his constitutional faculties (as mere powers of thought and feeling) remained unaltered—the same in number *after* his defection from holiness or loyal affection towards God: conversion, therefore, cannot be the recovery of any *lost* faculties of the mind; nor, on the same ground, can it be the origination of any *new* ones.

Still further, as we have said, not only was the *number* of these constitutional powers of the human mind neither diminished nor increased, but they were not changed or altered in themselves. The change which took place, consequent upon the fall of man, did not destroy any of his faculties, but only disordered their exercise. The original supremacy and governing *control* of man's moral judgment over all his other powers were broken, but conscience itself was not destroyed. When we say that the faculties which man possessed were unchanged by the fall, we only mean that their *essential character* remained the same. We do not, for instance, deny that the *actual perception* of truth was obscured, or, that the *moral impressions of conscience* were less vivid

and influential; and that the affections became corrupted and misplaced: we only mean to say that the *capabilities* of perception, conscience and affection remained, essentially, what they were, and that it is in the *reproduction* of right judgment and affection that Divine influence effects its work in conversion. It is upon the *moral bias* of the heart, chiefly, that the power of the Holy Spirit is exerted. Unconverted men have the power to think, to love, to purpose and so on, but they think *wrongly*, they love the *wrong objects*, and follow the *wrong pursuits*. It is their present *thoughts*, their *actually existing affections* and conduct which require to be rectified. This is what the Divine Spirit does within them.

We cannot be too particular in impressing the fact, that it changes not their *powers* of thought, affection, and will, but only their present thoughts, desires, and purposes. It renews them, not in their constitutional faculties, but in "*the spirit of their minds*:"—this is conversion. The unconverted have the faculties of man entire; the converted man acquires no *new* faculties, but the original ones become, under the influence of Divine grace, far differently engaged;—they are re-directed by the Spirit of God. The machine, to employ that figure in an accommodated sense, is regulated afresh by Divine power, not *irresistibly*, but with man's own concurrence. Neither man nor any other intelligent creature *can* destroy any of the faculties of his moral constitution by sinning. He can and does prostitute and impair, but *destroy* or essentially alter them, he never can. Even Satan's awful perversion of his powers cannot annihilate any one of them; they are essential to his being; they were essential to virtuous obedience in the "first estate;" they are essential to the responsible character of present conduct, and equally essential to the full effect of future retribution. The account we give of conversion agrees with the language of Scripture when intelligently interpreted. Many figures are employed in the Scriptures to describe this change, and indicate its thorough and radical character. It is called being "born again;" "created *anew* in Christ Jesus." And,



as far as man's actual views, objects, desires, affections, habits, and purposes are concerned, these figures are amply vindicated. But with all this change in motives, principles, and general experience, and the corresponding outward manifestations, the rational *constitution* of man remains entire and unaltered. It was the *actual affection* of love to God which man lost in the fall, not the constitutional *capability* of loving Him.

The mind is enlightened by *supernatural truth*; the heart renewed by a *supernatural application* of the truth; the renewing influence is exerted in harmony with our rational and voluntary constitution. This is not reducing the doctrine of conversion to the mere natural influence of truth: it is, as we have said, supernatural truth *supernaturally applied*. "Sanctified by the word of truth, *through the Spirit*." The ruling dispositions are changed by the power of grace, but the frame-work of the mental and moral constitution remains the same.

We observe then :—

III. THAT CONVERSION IS EFFECTED IN SUCH A WAY AS NOT TO DESTROY THE FREE-AGENCY OF MAN. The essentials of moral responsibility, viz., *a perception of right and wrong*, and the *power to act upon either*, remain inviolate. This excludes any *irresistible* influence. Irresistible influence annihilates proper responsibility, on this ground, therefore, if on no other, we should anticipate that conversion is not brought about by any influence which is irresistible by man. The influence which men bring to bear upon the minds of each other does not destroy their individual freedom, neither does the influence which God exerts upon the mind of man destroy his liberty of decision and action. On no other principle can the government of God be vindicated, or the final condition of the impenitent be ascribed to their own will. The working of the Divine Spirit is in accordance with the laws of mind. Neither any law of mental action, nor any condition of responsibility whatever, is violated by the operations



of the Spirit of God. Divine truth is presented to our understanding and conscience, showing us *why* we should repent, believe, and obey the Gospel. It is not the Spirit who repents, believes or loves *for* us, nor even *in* us; but simply influences *us* to repent, believe, and love. The work is the fruit of the Spirit but it is nevertheless a voluntary action of man's personal powers. The power of will in man can resist this influence from without, but man's will must still remain arbiter, if responsibility is to be unaffected. All *moral* influences are resistible. When influence becomes irresistible it ceases to be moral, and becomes physical. Moral influence is the influence of *motive*, in the shape of truth or interest, and therefore, implies a *bona-fide* option in the agent. It implies a power of independent determination, which may set at nought motives which *ought* to be the most influential, and may act upon such as are inferior. The moral agent can hearken to the pleadings of reason and the Spirit of God, or listen to the solicitations of evil passion, and arbitrarily make his preference. Motive, it is true, must exist where there is moral action; for the responsibility of man arises not from a power to act *without* motive, but the power to act either with or against those motives from which he *ought* to act;—from a power to allow *the wrong* motive to sway his decision. To deny this involves an absolute fatalism. It would be equivalent to saying that the sinner who *does not* repent, *cannot* repent; it is to argue that Adam and the fallen angels *could not* have acted otherwise because they *did not*. But however strong temptation may be, it always remains possible for man to resist it. It is true that since the fall the innate bias of man would lead to sinful choice, but we must remember that a counteractive influence is supplied to every man as he cometh into the world. This measure of gracious influence is brought to bear upon him (whether he prays for it or not) in order to give him a fair possibility of believing the Gospel and obeying its requirements. The work of Christ has procured that this influence should be shed down upon the sinner; the *man's own will*

*must* determine whether *more* grace and power shall be communicated, for even the influences of the Divine Spirit must appeal to man's arbitrary power of choice. As long as reason and conscience maintain their antagonism to passion, propensity is not *necessarily* dominant ; this antagonism they do maintain. Because man has propensities, it does not follow that he must inevitably be governed by them : his moral trial consists in this very struggle between contrary *tendencies*. Man's moral obedience, we say, consists in this very *resistance* of tendency, and *in no other way can he be put to moral probation*, than by having to decide between rival and opposing tendencies. So far from the fixed and determinate action of evil tendency (subjective or objective) involving the destruction of freedom and responsibility, it is absolutely essential to both, and the only possible condition of their existence and exercise. That the influence of the Divine Spirit is *superadded* to the natural influence of means does not destroy the independence and responsibility of the agent. The operation of the Holy Spirit in this work does not *exclude* but *appropriates* every suitable means for giving the truth effect upon the mind. The operation of the Spirit thus *assumes* adaptation of means to ends, instead of superseding its necessity. In the use of means, the laws of intelligent conviction must be regarded, or Divine influence is forfeited. Truth, conscience, and the Spirit's influence are *all* concerned in the work of conversion ;—there must be truth to convince, conscience to be convinced, and the influence of the Divine Spirit to open the mind to the truth, and effectually to apply it—sanctification is through the truth.

The phenomena of conversion, then, admit of an analysis consistent with the usual operation of the laws of mind :—the *effects* produced prove the Divine *origin* of the power, but the *mode of its operation* is natural, and leaves the *free agency of man unaffected*.

RIPON.

SUBJECT:—*Christ the Man of Sorrows.*

“A man of sorrows.”—Isaiah liii. 3.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Seventy-seventh.

MAN exists in living contact with all time,—past, present, and future. Among the millions who have lived and toiled on earth, occupying positions higher or lower, and commanding more or less extensive views of all time, the prophet Isaiah stands pre-eminent. His prophetic eye darts through the vista of ages, and by the light of inspiration he is able to read the histories of men and the destinies of nations yet unborn. Standing above the yawning deep of the dark unknown, he sees the buried future, as it moves to life and being. Empires rise and fall; nations are buried in the deep, while others float upon the surface; individuals come and go. Like the ant-hill, the coming world is in perpetual motion;—beings successively appearing, struggling, and vanishing out of sight.

But among the myriads there is One, who, by His strange movements and majestic looks, engages the prophet's attention more than all others; so much so, that he notices His birth, traces His development, pictures in glowing colors His triumphs, records His tears and sighs, follows Him through all His agonies, gazes on Him with wonder as He dies, and gives to the world an epitome of His history:—“a man of sorrows,” &c. Had our Saviour been *only* a man, the statement of the text would not have been wonderful, inasmuch as we know that He was a *Reformer*; and such is ever the fate of every one, who, like the Great Teacher, turns the current of influence in a different direction, cuts a new channel in which it may flow, infuses a healthier element into the atmosphere of society, and adds another principle of motion to the machinery that moves the world in the direction of true progress. From some cause or other—ignorance, envy, or madness—such noble souls

have ever been regarded, in *their day*, as the "corrupters of the youth" or "the perverters of religion." Why then should Jesus of Nazareth have been an exception on the supposition that He was a mere man? But He was not a mere man, but an *incarnation of the Godhead*; and here lies the mystery. On this account we should have expected Him to be differently treated, as being the long-expected Messiah; the object to which all the Mosaic ritual pointed as the needle to the pole, and the centre from which emanated every blessing. Like the sun in the physical creation, His influence was felt through the whole system of moral being. He gave light and life to all that revolved around Him, showed the deformity of moral chaos, quickened into life the dormant seeds of truth, melted the icy soil of the sinner's heart, and clothed the barren tree in tropical beauty. He was the least of men and the highest of beings; the ideal of humanity and veritable Deity; and in the tragedy that ended His life were seen sin in its deepest dyes and mercy in its brightest colors.

Viewing Him, then, as God incarnate, we are astonished not only that He *was*, as a matter of fact, but that He *could* be, as a matter of possibility, "a man of sorrows." Where could these sorrows originate? How could they affect Him? While on earth He was surrounded by many sources of pleasure. The earth teemed with every form of life, and the air was melodious with music. The sceneries of His native country suggested the sublimest imagery, and inspired poetry of the highest kind: and had He possessed none of these He would have been perfectly happy, for He was the Infinite; and what are all things finite compared with one so great, but a drop compared with the ocean, or an atom-sand with the material universe? *Our* happiness is oft destroyed by dark pictures of the future, the creations of conscious guilt, or the concomitants of creature ignorance. Christ alone can answer the hard questionings of our inquiring soul, annihilate our doubts, wipe away our tears, hush to calm the raging elements within, make the boiling ocean as a sea of glass, and whisper in the ear of the spirit as it trembles on

the banks of death's dark river, that there is a land of peace and joy beyond the swelling billows, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." But how could He, who alone can remove the evils of all others, be yet Himself "a man of sorrows?" Sensitive pleasure, appropriate society, intellectual culture, and true religion, may deeply and eternally affect the condition of man, but can they have any influence on the mental state of God incarnate? And yet He was "a man of sorrows;" not occasionally, but *constantly*. Behold Him as He passes by. Oh, what anxious looks! Deep thought is written on His countenance and engraved upon His heart. Yet He is a stranger to guilt and sin. God clothes the grass of the field in unrivalled glory, and not a sparrow can fall to the ground without His notice; but how is He, the Son of God, the Son of Man, "a man of sorrows?" The following considerations may help to remove some of the difficulty:—

I. THAT HIS SORROWS AROSE FROM THE FELT RELATION OF A LOVING BEING TO A RUINED RACE. There was a relation and that relation was *felt*. As God, He was our Father, as man, our brother; and however deep our degradation, great our guilt, and numerous our miseries, the relation remains the same as a fact, and continues in its influence. No conduct can break the ties of nature, or stop the avenues to a father's soul. The parable of the prodigal son beautifully illustrates this point.

Do you see that city, with its lofty towers and gay people? The streets are crowded by the joyous throng. They see on the distant hill the shining helmets and the glittering steel, and hear the neighing of war steeds, and the rattling of martial chariots. A messenger has just arrived, bearing tidings that banish sadness from every home and heart;—the enemy is conquered. The organ pours forth its swelling music and the air is rent by shouts of joy; the ringleader of the rebellion is slain. Amid all this joy the king himself is sad. He sits not in the banquet-hall, nor joins the merry



dance. Ah! no; his heart is full of sorrow. He runs through the chambers of the palace, and his frantic voice is echoed through the mighty halls, repeating again and again, "O my son Absalom, &c. I ask, shall David, the hero of ancient times, mourn over the miseries of his rebellious son, and shall not God pity His disobedient children? Whatever be the theories of men on this subject, I rejoice to find that the testimony of the Bible is clear. "God so loved the world," &c. This solves the strange enigma of our text, that Christ was "a man of sorrows."

II. THAT HIS SORROWS AROSE FROM THE CRUSHING PRESSURE OF HIS MEDIATORIAL WORK. This is represented as being the greatest of all His works. Compared with this the firmament dwindles to a point, and the whole created universe is contracted to an atom. It involves sufferings of whose nature, intensity, nay, possibility even, we can form no *positive* conception. Yet, "He died, the just for the unjust," &c. "He was wounded for our transgressions," &c. "He bore our sins," &c.

III. THAT HIS SORROWS AROSE FROM HIS CERTAIN KNOWLEDGE THAT THE RESULT OF HIS MISSION WOULD NOT BE EQUAL TO THE BENEVOLENCE OF HIS WILL. That many of our race will be *eternally* lost is a terrible fact. Gladly would we believe in the final gathering of the last wanderer to his Father's home;—but in such a pleasant hope we cannot for a moment indulge. Many have been hopelessly lost already, and myriads more, alas! are willingly rushing to the same ruin. True, the number of the lost will form but a small fraction compared with those saved by the blood of Christ. But, were *only one* for ever lost, the loving Saviour *could not* look on such a fact without the deepest sorrow. "He willeth not the death of the wicked," &c.

But why should any be lost? What hinders their salvation? My friend, *unbelief* is the only barrier between you and heaven. Your Heavenly Father still pities you, though



a rebellious child. The Son of God, to save you, became "a man of sorrows;" and the Spirit, for His sake, still strives with your soul, and is anxious to save you from destruction. All obstacles have been removed, except that unbelief which yet endangers your safety. Look to the love of Jesus, as He lived and died for you, "a man of sorrows," and "be not faithless but believing."

EVAN LEWIS, B.A.

SUBJECT :—*The Meeting at Appii Forum and The Three Taverns.*

"And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii forum, and The three taverns : whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage."—Acts xxviii. 15.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Seventy-eighth.

THE text describes a beautiful incident in the journey of Paul from Cæsarea to Rome. With the occasion, hardships, perils, and deliverances, of that journey we are familiar. And now it is drawing to an end ; Appii forum and The three taverns are reached : the former being about fifty, and the latter thirty-three, miles distant from the imperial city. At these stages Christian brethren from Rome meet and salute the veteran soldier and prisoner of Jesus Christ. No sooner does he recognise them than he experiences a striking elevation of soul ; pausing in his wearying march he offers thanks to God, and full of hope and confidence, advances with a firm, elastic step to the scene of his final toil and pain. But it is impossible to view the text in its connexion without feeling that it requires *explanation*. The advent of these brethren does not seem to be a cause adequate to the effect produced. Paul found brethren in Puteoli, but it is not said that while there he was the subject of any such happy influences as came upon him at Appii forum and The three taverns.

What was there in this incident that it so powerfully and beneficially affected the apostle's mind? I shall make some remarks in reply to this question:—

I. THAT PAUL REGARDED IT AS EXPRESSIVE OF THE SYMPATHY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN ROME. Sympathy is solace and help. Like the oil and wine of the good Samaritan, it *heals and strengthens*. It would be thoroughly appreciated by such a man as Paul; he who enjoined upon the Romans this duty, "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep." Of this sympathy, I observe, (1) It was *timely*. Think of Paul's circumstances. (2) It was *practical*. It travelled further than mere sentiment and words,—even thirty-three and fifty miles of hard road. (3) It was *noble*. Paul was a *prisoner*, but they did not despise "his chain"; he was a *Christian*, about to answer for his life, yet they dared to identify themselves with him. And, alas! (4) It was *inconstant*. "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me." Now I can well understand how the arrivals of the warm-hearted brethren from Rome would awaken the gratitude and confidence of the jaded and captive apostle.

II. THAT PAUL REGARDED IT AS A TOKEN OF GOD'S PROVIDENTIAL CARE. His elation on these occasions implies a previous corresponding depression; produced in part, perhaps, by an imperfect realization of Divine paternal care. Once before, during the storm at sea, his heart sank within him; and now as he draws near to Rome it again fails; but as the angel who stood by him in the night-season made him of good cheer, so the meeting at Appii forum and The three taverns constrained him "to thank God and take courage." It assured him that he was the object of Divine solicitude, and that perilous as his circumstances were, all was well. But how trivial is the event mentioned! Not in the estimation of faith. It indicated the hand of God. The cloud seen by the servant on Carmel

was in itself a little thing, but it was of great moment to Elijah. By no means could Paul be more effectually cheered than by a vivid realization of God's care for him. "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

III. THAT PAUL REGARDED IT AS PROPHETIC OF THE UNIVERSAL TRIUMPH OF CHRISTIANITY. Doubtless the chief cause of the depression, to which I have alluded, was the existence in Paul's mind of gloomy apprehensions in reference to the Gospel. The Jews had persecuted him to the uttermost; he was deprived of his liberty; his life was in jeopardy. Alas! for the infant Churches he had planted; alas! for the progress of the World of Life. He had hoped to see the religion of the Cross firmly established in the earth before he fell asleep, but now——what? Lo! brethren, genuine Christians arrive from Rome. Rome! the city of the Cæsars; the mistress of the world, whose influence was world-wide; the Gospel has taken the firm hold on *Rome*,—and from thence it shall diffuse itself to the ends of the earth! Such was the thought, which, I believe, the arrival of these brethren brought vividly before the mind of Paul; and under its influence, "he thanked God and took courage." He could not serve the Gospel better than he did during those "two whole years," which he spent in "preaching the Kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ."

The subject teaches us further :—

(1) That the most eminent of God's servants may be discouraged. (2) That God will opportunely interfere in their behalf. (3) That such interpositions should work in them gratitude and confidence.

H. C. H.

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SUBJECT:—*Giving, the Condition of Getting.*

“Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good,” &c.—1 Tim. vi. 17—19.

*Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Seventy-ninth.*

THERE is no duty more clearly and repeatedly enjoined in the Scriptures than that of the rich to assist the poor. It is regarded as one of the most powerful evidences of true religion. The piety which the Bible recognises as genuine is not that sentimental feeling which expends itself in talk, sighs, and spiritual songs, but that which leads to practical philanthropy. “If a man seeth his brother in need,” &c.

In these verses we have one of Paul’s arguments enforcing this duty. It consists of four facts:—

I. THAT SECULAR WEALTH IS UNCERTAIN IN ITS NATURE, AND LIKELY TO BE ABUSED. Worldly riches are:—First: *Uncertain in their nature.* “Uncertain riches.” Every day furnishes us with illustrations of the uncertainty of worldly wealth. “Riches make to themselves wings,” &c. If, then, they are thus uncertain, make use of them while they are in your possession. Turn them to a right moral account and you cannot lose them. Secondly: *They are likely to be abused.* (1) They are likely in the depraved heart to foster pride. “Be not highminded.” Highmindedness in man is moral madness. (2) They are likely to divert our trust from God. Such is the power of money in this world, that the man who has it feels he can procure all the necessaries and comforts of life. Hence he calls himself an “independent” man, and feels himself to be so. He trusts to it for all, and thus is guilty of two moral absurdities. (1) Trusts a *dead thing* rather than the *living God*. “Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years,” &c. “The living God,” the absolute proprietor of all wealth is practically overlooked. (2) Trusts in a *single gift* rather than the *universal Giver*. Who “gives us all things richly to enjoy.” He gives to men—He gives *all* things to men—He gives to all men “richly”

—there is nothing given niggardly—He gives to all men “richly to enjoy.”

II. THAT A PROPER DISTRIBUTION OF SECULAR WEALTH WILL INCREASE OUR SPIRITUAL RESOURCES. “That they do good, that they be rich in good works,” &c. First: *The nature of a proper distribution.* (1) Proportionate—“rich in good works.” Paul is referring to rich men—therefore he says, *rich liberality.* Reason and the Bible teach that men ought to communicate according to their ability. In proportion to the amount of a man’s wealth should be the amount of his benevolence. (2) Hearty—“ready to distribute.” The giving merely according to the law of proportion will not be a proper giving, if the heart is not in it. The heart must go with the gift. I would far rather have the disposition to give, without the capacity, than the capacity without the disposition. The disposition is a good in itself, a source of joyous feeling, a Divine pledge of a happy immortality: but if I have the world without it I am the victim of selfishness, a pauper in the universe, an exile from God. Secondly: *The tendency of a proper distribution.* “Laying up in store.” The general meaning of this is, that a proper distribution of secular good increases our spiritual wealth. Solomon expresses this idea when he says, “There is he that scattereth and yet increaseth.” The man that really does good to others confers imperishable advantage on himself. The good deed does not pass away from the doer,—it leaves its spirit behind it. The man, who rightly gives the most away, makes the largest fortune in a spiritual sense. Good feelings are very well in their place; good ideas are very well in their place; but if they take not the form of deeds, they are only as clouds without water, as the sap of the fruit tree going off in blossoms.

III. THAT AN INCREASE OF OUR SPIRITUAL RESOURCES IS NECESSARY TO PREPARE US FOR THE FUTURE. “Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation for the time to come.” First: *Man has a future.* He has “a time to come.” Of the lower creatures around us you could scarcely say so; when they

die their time is ended:—not so with man. Man will ever have “a time to come.” The oldest human spirit in the great world of retribution has still a time to come. Secondly: *Eternal life is possible in man’s future.* “Lay hold of eternal life.” Eternal life! what does it mean? Negatively, it means life without sin, without imperfection, without end. Positively, it means life in intimate communion and fellowship with God and his blessed Son; life in the healthful, harmonious, and happy development of all our tendencies and powers; life in the path of endless progress in knowledge, in goodness, in dignity, and in bliss. Thirdly: *This eternal life is to be laid hold of by increasing our spiritual resources now.* “Lay hold,” &c. Paul teaches that a certain well-established character is a preparation for the time to come. A settled consciousness of forgiveness through the blood of Jesus Christ—a firm trust in the parental providence of the living God—truthful, generous, and devout principles of action, nurtured by habits of benevolence, honesty, and piety;—these things will prepare us for the “time to come.”

What an argument you have here then for beneficence,—for relieving the poor! From this subject learn:—(1) *The unity of a good man’s history.* The future will grow out of his present. “Whatsoever a man soweth,” &c. (2) *The glory of a good man’s destiny.* What a glorious future will grow out of a virtuous character!—ETERNAL LIFE!

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SUBJECT:—*Divine Sonship.*

“The glorious liberty of the children of God.”—Rom. viii. 21.

Analysis of Homily the One Hundred and Eightieth.

FROM these words we infer:— I. THAT THERE ARE SOME MEN WHO ARE ACTUALLY AFFILIATED TO GOD. “They are the sons of God.” What does this mean? First: *Not mere creatureship.* All things, mountains and valleys, suns and stars, are the creatures of God; but we do not call them His children. Secondly: *Not mere resemblance.* Moral spirits everywhere



are in some humble measure like God; yet we do not call devils His children. It means the possession of the true FILIAL SPIRIT;—"The spirit of adoption." The difference between the converted and the unconverted is simply this;—one properly feels the true spirit of his relationship, the other does not. *To give this spirit to man is the great end of Christianity.* It is the "new heart." II. THAT THIS AFFILIATION TO GOD IS CONNECTED WITH GLORIOUS LIBERTY. "The glorious liberty," &c. Liberty, what a magic word! But this is "*glorious liberty.*" First: *It is purchased at an immense cost.* The struggles of the slaves, the sacrifices of the patriot give value to liberty. But this liberty has cost infinitely more. "Ye are not redeemed with corruptible things," &c. Secondly: *It involves the entire freedom of man.* Some men are free in some respects and slaves in others. The limbs may be free, the passions may be free, the intellect may be free, and yet the moral heart may be in chains. This is the freedom of the entire man in all his faculties and relations. Thirdly: *It is a liberty in harmony with the rights of the universe and the glory of God.* There is a liberty which implies the slavery of others. But not this. Fourthly: *It is a liberty that will never find a termination.* The powers, the sphere, and the facilities, of this liberty will be ever increasing with the ages.

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SUBJECT :—*The Christian Plan.*

"What the law could not do," &c.—Rom. viii. 3, 4.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Eighty-first.

THERE are three things in this passage concerning the Christian plan. I. THE OCCASION OF ITS INTRODUCTION. It is introduced in consequence of the *inefficiency* of law:—to do what the law could not. First: *What could not the law do?* It could not do that which man, as a sinner, required for his salvation. Man, as a sinner, required two things, (1) A nature for heaven, and (2) A title to heaven. Law could give him neither. It can neither *regenerate* nor *justify*. Secondly: *Why could not the law do this?* Not because there is any-

thing in it essentially inimical to happiness:—law is essentially *good*. The text explains its inefficiency, “weak through the flesh,” *i. e.* weak in consequence of man’s depravity. It cannot make man happy, because man is *corrupt*. *This weakness of law is its glory*. It is the glory of law that it cannot stoop to human imperfections; were it to do so the order of the moral universe would be destroyed. II. THE HISTORY OF ITS DEVELOPMENT. “God sending his own Son,” &c. Observe:—First: *The mission of Jesus*. “God sending.” He sent Him to do what the law could not do,—*regenerate and justify*. Sovereign love is the primal spring. Secondly: *The incarnation of Jesus*. “In the likeness of sinful flesh.” Only the *likeness*. His humanity was necessary as an *example* and as an atonement. Thirdly: *The sacrifice of Jesus*. For a “sin-offering,” &c. His death was a sacrifice. III. THE DESIGN OF ITS OPERATION. “That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled,” &c. He did not come to abrogate, relax, or supersede law, but to fulfil it;—that “its righteousness might be fulfilled” in the sinner. The Christian plan does this in three ways:—First: *By presenting law in its most attractive forms*. In the life of Jesus. Secondly: *By presenting law in connexion with the greatest motives to obedience*. In Christ you see God’s Infinite respect for law as well as His love for sinners. Thirdly: *By presenting law in connexion with the greatest helper*—The Holy Spirit. “It is expedient for you that I go away,” &c.

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SUBJECT:—*The Suppliant Encouraged*.

“Upbraideth not.”—James v. 6.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Eighty-second.

THERE are at least six circumstances which are likely to induce men to upbraid those who seek of them a favor:—I. WHEN THE SUPPLIANT HAS BROUGHT THE DISTRESS ON HIMSELF. In this case the party applied to is likely to upbraid and say, it is your own fault that you are in this condition, had you acted otherwise, &c. But although the sinner has brought his wretchedness upon himself God will not up-

braid. II. WHEN THE SUPPLIANT HAS ENDEAVORED TO INJURE THE PARTY OF WHOM HE SEEKS THE FAVOR. In such cases he is likely to meet with severe reproofs. How can you think of asking me a favor whom you sought so much to injure? But although the sinner has sought to injure God, He will not upbraid him when he asks a favor. III. WHEN THE SUPPLIANT BECOMES TOO FREQUENT IN HIS APPLICATION. If he has been relieved frequently before, he is all but certain of being upbraided. Not so with God, the more frequent the more welcome. "In everything by prayer and supplication," &c. IV. WHEN THE SUPPLIANT IS AN UTTER STRANGER TO THE PARTY APPEALED TO. There is then suspicion, and the plea is that acquaintances and neighbors have the first claim. There is upbraiding. But not so with God. None are strangers to Him. V. WHEN THE SUPPLIANT HAPPENS TO APPEAL AT AN INCONVENIENT SEASON. Too early in the morning, or too late at night, or in the midst of engagements with friends, clients, or customers. Then there will be upbraiding. But not so with God. VI. WHEN THE SUPPLIANT APPLIES TO ONE IN WHOSE HEART THERE IS NO TRUE BENEVOLENCE. This is the cause of all upbraidings. But not so with God. "GOD IS LOVE."

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SUBJECT:—*The Soul.*

"Lord Jesus receive my spirit."—Acts vii. 59.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Eighth-third.

FROM this last short prayer of the first Christian martyr we infer four facts in relation to the soul. I. THAT MAN'S SOUL SURVIVES CORPOREAL DEATH. This was now a matter of *consciousness* with Stephen. He had no doubt about it, and hence he prays Jesus to take it. This is with all men rather a matter of *feeling* than argument. The Bible not only recognises and addresses this feeling, but ministers to its growth. II. THAT IN DEATH THE IMPORTANCE OF MAN'S SOUL IS ESPECIALLY FELT. The "Spirit" was now everything to Stephen. And so it is to all dying men. Death ends all material interests and relations, and the soul grows more and

more conscious of herself as she feels her approach into the world of spirits. III. THAT THE WELL-BEING OF THE SOUL CONSISTS IN ITS DEDICATION TO JESUS. "Receive my spirit." "Into thine hand," &c. What is meant by this dedication? (1) *Not the giving up of our personality.* Such pantheism is absurd. (2) *Not the surrender of our free agency.* But the PLACING OF ITS POWERS ENTIRELY AT HIS SERVICE AND ITS DESTINY ENTIRELY AT HIS DISPOSAL. *This is the true pantheism.* This implies, of course, strong faith, in the kindness and the power of Jesus. IV. THAT THIS DEDICATION OF THE SOUL TO JESUS IS THE ONE GREAT THOUGHT OF THE EARNEST SAINT. It is the beginning and end of religion, or rather the very essence of it. The first breath and every subsequent respiration of piety is,—“Into thine hands, O God, I commit my spirit.”

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SUBJECT:—*Forgiveness.*

“Father forgive them for they know not what they do.”—Luke xxiii. 34.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Eighty-fourth.

I. THAT SIN THOUGH COMMITTED IN IGNORANCE REQUIRES FORGIVENESS. The Jews, in crucifying Christ, did two things they never intended doing. (1) *They ruined themselves.* (2) *They served God.* “Him being delivered,” &c. All sinners are doing these two things. They ought to have known better, they might have known better. Their *conscience* and their *Scriptures*, had they been consulted, would have taught them. II. THAT FORGIVENESS IS EVERMORE THE PREROGATIVE OF GOD. “No man can forgive sins but God only.” Hence Christ appeals to Him. All sins of every kind, personal and relative, are against Him; He only therefore has the right to forgive. III. THAT THE EXERCISE OF THIS PREROGATIVE IS SECURED THROUGH THE INTERCESSION OF CHRIST. Christ prays for it. “There is no other name.” IV. THAT THIS INTERCESSION IS AVAILABLE FOR THE CHIEF OF SINNERS. For whom did Christ now pray?

# Monuments.

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GEORGE PAYNE.—RALPH WARDLAW.—

JOHN PYE SMITH.

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THE Christian ministry is the highest calling on earth. Success cannot be secured without a rare union of qualifications:—there is room for the noblest—and the proper fulfilment of it becomes the greatest known power for blessing mankind. While other callings work indirectly for human well-being, this works directly. Without secular instrumentality, which is remote in operation and liable to divert and distract, this aims immediately at the object, and by the living word comes at once into contact with conscience and the soul.

But the office which we now deal with is the Christian ministry of the highest degree. The same qualifications, responsibilities, powers belong to it, but each intensified. It is that of the Professor of Theology, the educator of the select minds which are to influence thousands, the teacher of the teachers, and shepherd of the shepherds. To speak to others in the name of God, either strong words to awaken, or balmy words to heal, to be their praying spokesman or to intercede, require both peculiar natural fitness and a training in the costly school of learning, and the still costlier school of adversity. Yet often, if not often enough, our eyes may be blest with the sight of a true pastor and teacher; but a true professor of theology is a vision to be expected once or twice in a generation.

We inscribe on our page the names of three men, who, in their time, faithfully fulfilled the office we speak of, and of whom, within the last ten years, death has deprived their denomination and the universal church:—George Payne of Exeter, Ralph Wardlaw of Glasgow, John Pye Smith of Homerton. Contemporary criticism of individual character is objectionable for many obvious reasons; and is, to say the least, liable to incorrectness. But when prominent persons have been removed by death, justice to their names, and justice to ourselves demand a memorial, and their very removal renders it easier that our estimate should be at least approximately correct. Amongst mountains and hills, their



immediate vicinity hinders the perception of their relative magnitudes. Some appear too lofty, others too low. But distance adjusts them, and presents them to the eye on a scale where the monarchs display their gigantic proportions, and the pigmies dwindle to their proper insignificance. The glare of the sunlight of life may dazzle and confuse the eye that seeks to scan contemporary genius, but when solemn evening comes on with her pensive star, and the moon bathes all in calm and holy light, we are able more quietly to regard the excellencies of the departed great; and their foibles, once, perhaps, unduly and painfully visible, are now, as is meet, softened and lost in the general effect. Ere a man's life has ended, we cannot measure the meaning and the result of it, but when it offers itself as a whole, when summers have greened and winters have snowed over his grave, we may ask what impression remains, what influence will last, and what are the lessons?

The age in which these men lived, bordering so closely on ours, was such as demanded the loftiest qualities in prominent Christian teachers. All ages are virtually connected, and they who were powers in their day will continue through that to effect humanity to the end. We shall give a short account of the life and character of each, and then essay a comparison.

GEORGE PAYNE was born at Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire, in 1781. His father was at first a mechanic, but afterwards became a "Baptist" minister at Walgrave, in Northamptonshire. The seeds of piety were by parental care early sown in the heart of the son. The boy was eager for books, and soon exhausted his father's library. Even at this early period he had conceived the idea of becoming a minister. He spent some time at a good school at Northampton. Having on careful examination seen reason, spite of his father's opinion, to approve of the baptism of infants, he entered Hoxton College, in his twenty-first year, as a student for the ministry amongst Independents. It is evident that his propensity and aptitude for abstruse thought was natural; but, as often happens, an apparently accidental occurrence awakened the hitherto unconscious faculty, and led it into activity. This occasion was the stimulating talk of Robert Hall, whom he met at Walgrave during a college vacation. After studying at Hoxton for nearly three years, he was, together with Mr., afterwards Dr., Fletcher, of Stepney, sent,



by arrangement between the Hoxton Committee and Dr. Daniel Williams's trustees, to Glasgow University. Mr., afterwards Dr., Burder, of Hackney, accompanied them. The three young men became warm friends of each other and of Wardlaw of Glasgow, and his friendship continued until interrupted by death. After taking his degree of Master of Arts, Mr. Payne left Glasgow in 1807.

Having married the daughter of Mr. Gibbs of Hoxton, he assisted the Rev. Edward Parsons of Leeds, in the ministry, for a year, and the Rev. George Lambert of Hull, for about four years. About this time he was suspected by some, but probably without sufficient grounds, of an inclination to the doctrines of Sandeman. It is probable, however, that he profited from a correspondence which now took place between him and Dr. Edward Williams of Rotherham. In 1812, he became pastor of an Independent Church in Edinburgh, where, for nearly eleven years, he labored with honor and success. In 1822, he succeeded Dr. Fletcher in the theological chair of the Lancashire Independent College, which was then at Blackburn. In 1828, appeared his "Elements of Mental and Moral Science," a useful, but not very original exposition, of the school of Dr. Thomas Brown; which, however, appeared to the Senate of the University of Glasgow, sufficient to merit their diploma of LL.D. In 1829, Dr. Payne acceded to the pressing wish of the Committee of the Western College, then at Exeter, that he should become Professor of Theology there. This office, here and at Plymouth, whither the college was removed in 1846, he filled with great ability, manfully working as a writer as well as a Professor, during the remainder of his life, which was suddenly terminated in 1848, when he was in his sixty-seventh year.

Besides the work already mentioned, and the Congregational Lecture on "Original Sin," which he delivered in 1844, Dr. Payne's principal writings were "Lectures on Divine Sovereignty, Election, the Atonement, Justification, and Regeneration;" "The Church of Christ considered in reference to its Members, Objects, Duties, Officers, Government and Discipline;" "Elements of Language and General Grammar," and the posthumous volumes of "Lectures on Christian Theology." There were very many other books, of smaller size and less importance.

In person, Dr. Payne was small; his countenance calm, but animated by an eye full of meaning. He was naturally

loving and loveable, and possessed a large share of the humor which generally characterizes superior men. As a thinker, he was both acute and comprehensive, honest, and therefore free and original. He excelled as an analyst, was quick at estimating the strength or weakness of an argument, and, whether contending with others or investigating for himself, was in earnest in quest of things, and was not to be beguiled by words. His results are often highly valuable, and always deserve careful consideration. They will probably have a wide and permanent influence. Much of his theology is of the school of what has been somewhat quaintly called "Moderate Calvinism," standing midway between the unbending stiffness of the past and the elasticity of present thought. We think his Lectures on "Original Sin," a master-piece in their kind, and likely long to leaven and modify the theology of his country. His energy was chiefly employed on the border land between theology and philosophy. He had a respectable but not profound acquaintance with classic lore. His knowledge of the Fathers was limited, and of modern continental speculations he was nearly ignorant. As a Professor, his aim was rather to awaken and train, than to fill with mere information; and his method was varied according to the wants of individuals. His holy earnestness made him greatly venerated, and his sympathy beloved, by his pupils. As a preacher, he was solid rather than brilliant, and more earnest than popular. The Christian piety of Dr. Payne was distinguished for quality and power, permeating, sanctifying, and consecrating all the faculties of his being. In much self-denial he was ever obedient to duty and love.

We place Wardlaw next to Payne, on account of their intimate friendship. RALPH WARDLAW was born at Dalkeith, in 1779. His father had wealth and social importance. The youth was unconscious of any sudden conversion, his Christian character being the growth of home influences, and particularly of morning readings of the Greek Testament with his father. After four years at the grammar-school of Glasgow, Ralph entered, at the early age of twelve, the University there, and remained for six sessions. Thomas Campbell was among the students. Wardlaw had at first inclined to medicine, but that was overpowered by the attraction of the ministry. Having attended for two sessions the Divinity lectures at the University, he after-

wards studied for five years under Dr. Lawson, at the Hall of the Burgher Synod, Selkirk. In these preliminary studies he attained considerable proficiency in classics, logic and psychology, acquired a taste for botany and anatomy, but shewed no aptness for mathematics. It is probable that he profited much in Biblical criticism under Lawson. It appears to have been Wardlaw's habit through life to begin the day by a perusal of a portion of the Hebrew Bible or Greek Testament.

At the conclusion of his preparatory course, he somewhat surprised and disappointed his friends by declaring himself a Congregationalist. Academic rust hindered for a while his acceptance as a preacher. But this was soon rubbed off. He now diligently travelled through various parts of Scotland, to feed hungry souls with the bread of life. Scottish congregationalism was not the offspring of pedantic theory, but the natural outcome of new and vigorous Christian life, striving for extension.

In February, 1803, a new church was opened in Glasgow, which had been erected by Wardlaw's father and his other relatives for his use. Sixty-one persons, amicably seceding from the church of the Rev. Greville Ewing, at the Tabernacle, between whom and Wardlaw there were now and ever after a cordial friendship and co-operation, were formally constituted as a separate society, and Wardlaw ordained as their pastor. The church and congregation increased slowly but surely, and the youthful pastor labored and grew calmly and healthily. Stirring incident does not now much characterize the history of the minister and student. The combination of the contemplative and the active life is rarer now than of old. The record of Wardlaw's life is greatly one of preachments, speeches and publications. Yet he had more to do with great public, religious, philanthropic movements than most of his brethren. He early undertook, in conjunction with Mr. Ewing, the theological chair in the Glasgow Academy, which, jointly or alone, he held until death. He also often appeared before the public as an author, and in particular became an expert polemic. His well known "Discourses on the Principal Points of the Socinian Controversy," which led to a controversy with Yates, appeared in 1814. In 1818 he received from Yale College the diploma of D.D. In 1833, Dr. Pye Smith having declined, in consequence of special engagement, the appointment, Dr. Ward-

law delivered in London the first series of Congregational Lectures, which were afterwards published with the somewhat incorrect title of "Christian Ethics, or Moral Philosophy on the Principles of Divine Revelation." Although there is much that is most valuable in this work, yet, on the whole, it cannot be regarded as a standard on the subject.

The Glasgow relations he would never consent to dissolve, though he was often invited to other and more tempting theological chairs;—Hoxton, Rotherham, Spring Hill, Manchester. Nor did he give any encouragement when in 1828 he was sounded about the chair of Moral Philosophy in the University of London. These invitations were, of course, results and marks of his reputation as a man of the best kind of influence in his own sphere, and especially as a theologian. To see a man for a large number of years steadily resist so many considerable and so various allurements, and enduringly shed his light beneficently in the spot where it was first kindled, partakes of the moral sublime.

Perhaps the most important service ever rendered by Dr. Wardlaw to the kingdom of Christ, was by delivering in 1839, and afterwards publishing, "National Church Establishments Examined, in a course of Lectures." These were in reply to Dr. Chalmers, who had recently lectured on the other side.

The fruit of his marriage with Miss Smith, of Dunfermline, in 1803, was eleven children in all. One of his sons became a missionary, and two daughters married missionaries. His later days was embittered by calumny, the poison of which was however neutralized by the warm sympathy which was called forth. In 1853, the fiftieth year of his church and his pastorate was completed, and a solemn twofold jubilee was celebrated. Not long after this event he died, within a few days of completing his seventy-fourth year.

Seldom has a writer possessed a more serviceable brain, or a pen with easier paces. In addition to the works mentioned above, he published very valuable "Lectures on Female Prostitution;" "Discourses on the nature and Extent of the Atonement of Christ;"—a work which some regard as a masterpiece, and "Congregational Independency, in contradistinction to Episcopacy and Presbyterianism, the Church Polity of the New Testament"—which appears not to have fully satisfied the friends of Independency. After his death, appeared his "Theological Lectures," in three volumes octavo, of which

the reader will find a notice in the *Homilist* for November, 1857. Besides these he produced a numerous host of volumes, single sermons, pamphlets, magazine articles, and the like, of various degrees of merit. He was one of the most prolific, as well as popular and useful, of the religious writers of his age.

Dr. Wardlaw was of middle height, and vigorous and active frame ; the forehead high, but not very broad ; the features regular, eyebrows bushy, lips sweet but firm ; and the general expression was dignity and seriousness, combined with cheerfulness and benevolence. His intellect was active rather than acute ; and, working within somewhat strait limitations, could be neither creative nor remarkably comprehensive. If another has thoroughly examined a matter, and framed a good theory, Wardlaw may be trusted for the work of exposition. His mind was capable of prompt, vigorous, and sustained action, and was ever controlled and kept diligently at work by a will which was swayed by conscience. He delighted in the nice weighing of evidence. He possessed a naturally elegant and cultivated taste. He was ready at repartee. Yet he was gentle and kind, even tender. He had an exquisite power of consolation, and could produce the tears of nature. Yet at the proper moment he could shew high moral courage. When indignation was roused by unworthiness, he could utter burning words as with the tongue of a fiery serpent. Few men have known better than he the meaning of the word *home*. The hearth was his daily charm. He enlarges our conceptions of husband and father. He was a man of order. Yet as he well knew that a mechanical person cannot produce a vital impression, his habits were orderly rather from instinct than in obedience to a set of rules.

A man is known by friendships. In former years you see him the guest of the lively Gunn and the amiable Durant. Here he appears as colleague of the venerable Ewing, there faithful to Heugh ; accompanying with metaphysical Payne and refined Fletcher, corresponding through long years with practical Burder. You see him exchanging letters with an unseen brother divine, the transatlantic Woods, and are delighted with the gratitude of Morison, whose timid worth he had encouraged into the ministry. Nor must we omit his later colleague in the Academy, much his junior, the loveable, accomplished, but, alas ! early removed, John Morell Mackenzie.



As a preacher, Dr. Wardlaw attained a high degree of excellence, of a kind particularly suited to his country. He stood erect, with head thrown back, action sparing, but effective, voice clear as a silver bell, transparently flowing diction; the matter high but practical, the manner natural, somewhat unimpassioned, but solemn. When he adopted in later years the practice of reading, it became very effective in his hands.

His politics were liberal, his philanthropy self-denying. He excelled on the border region of politics and religion.

As a theologian, he belonged rather to the class who test the old dogmas for scripture, retaining what they can with modifications, than to those who, coming to the Bible with unpreoccupied minds, obtain *therefrom* their list of doctrines and their first principles of truth. His reading in theology was select rather than extensive. His knowledge of the Fathers and the Schoolmen was small. He had paid very little attention to modern metaphysics, and as to German theology he was very much in the dark. He highly esteemed the writings of Edward Williams, Andrew Fuller, and of some of the older Scottish divines; and had in a measure been formed by them as a theologian.\*

As theological tutor, Dr. Wardlaw was remarkable for the profound reverence for the Bible, which he manifested and inculcated. Who shall estimate the healthy influence shed on his pupils, and through them on thousands more, by the piety of their teacher? Taking him altogether, we may affirm that he reached a peak of excellence and renown higher than which very few of his contemporaries climbed; whence he wielded a widely beneficent influence, and whither he attracted well-merited veneration and gratitude.

JOHN PYE SMITH was born in 1774, at Sheffield, where his father was a bookseller. Early association with this business furnished the boy with opportunities for mental cultivation, which he knew how to value and employ. It seems that, as a boy, he for the most part educated himself, receiving however instruction in Latin Grammar and translation from his father and the Rev. Jehoiada Brewer, his pastor, without attendance at school. In 1790 he was bound apprentice to his father. About this time he was brought by the power of Divine grace to yield to the pious influences by which he was surrounded in his father's house. On his full admission to a

\* See his Memoirs by Dr. W. L. Alexander, pp. 80, 481, &c.



Christian church in 1792, he particularly mentions "Alleine's Alarm to the Unconverted," as having been a means of early impression. James Montgomery and he were at this time friends; and during the imprisonment of the former for political reasons, for six months, in 1796, the latter occupied his place as editor of the "Sheffield Iris." After careful consideration of the nature of the office, and of his fitness for it, he decided on following the ministry as his calling; and in 1796 entered Rotherham College, where the able Dr. Edward Williams was then theological tutor. Superior to his senior fellow students even at his entrance, he had on leaving the college in 1800, so far improved his intellectual acquisitions, as to be regarded almost a prodigy of learning, linguistic, scientific, and theologic.

Pye Smith's connexion with Homerton College, which was to continue long, and to be happy for himself, the institution and the church, began in 1801, when he became resident tutor. About the same time, he married a lady whose idiosyncrasies occasioned a painful and enduring discipline. In 1804 he was ordained as pastor of a church which he had himself gathered, and which afterwards assembled at the Old Gravel Pit Meeting House. In 1805 he became theological tutor, an office which he held with almost uninterrupted prosperity and unsurpassed honor for forty-five years, until, in 1850, the institution, whose glory was his relation to it, was united with others in the constitution of New College. He resided at the college until 1807, and then from 1843 until 1850. After a widowhood of more than ten years, he married a second time in 1843, with happier results than the first. In 1807 he received from Yale College the diploma of D.D., signed by Timothy Dwight, and in 1835 the diploma of LL.D. from Marischal College, Aberdeen. In 1836 he became Fellow of the Geological Society, and, in 1840, Fellow of the Royal Society, the latter an honor which, we believe, was never attained by an orthodox dissenter before. It was due in this case to the high standing and reputation of Dr. Pye Smith as a scholar, and, in particular, was occasioned by the excellence of his work on "Scripture and Geology," which he had delivered as the "Congregational Lecture" for the preceding year.

In 1850 Dr. Pye Smith delivered his farewell address at Homerton, after laying the foundation stone of New College, and then retired to Guildford. His health was now fast fail-

ing; he had already had a stroke of paralysis, and at this time suffered much from lassitude and depression. On January 8th, 1851, a testimonial, consisting of 2,600*l.*, was presented to him at a breakfast at the London Tavern. The money had been contributed by venerating and loving friends. The interest was to be enjoyed by him during life, and afterwards the principal was to be employed in founding "Pye Smith Divinity Scholarships," in connexion with New College. This joyful but solemn morning was, alas! the last time he ever appeared in public. He sank rapidly, and on February 5th was the translation.

Dr. Pye Smith's "Scripture Testimony to the Messiah" is one of the most important of his works. Here all the passages of Scripture which relate to the Person of Christ are investigated with profound criticism and logic, and clearly expounded; the doctrine drawn from each, and the result of all summed up. The most extensive and accurate erudition, Biblical and theologic, is everywhere displayed. The work will probably always remain a standard, and be regarded as a master-piece, a monument of successful industry and sagacity, an example of the right method in theologic science. His "Four Discourses on the Sacrifice and Priesthood of Jesus Christ," though a much smaller work, are conceived and executed in a very similar spirit. The work, "On the relation between the Holy Scriptures and some parts of Geological Science," has peculiar value and charms. A stranger to his other writings and to his reputation might at once perceive it to be the production of a profound scholar. Knowledge of natural science, and particularly of that branch of it which the book directly deals with, is most prominent. The object of the book is to shew, that there is and can be no real discrepancy between the teachings of Scripture, particularly on the Creation and the Deluge, and the results of genuine geology. It is everywhere characterized by a rare spirit of enlightened piety, and is written in a style of singular power and beauty. Of all the productions of the accomplished author this is the most mark-worthy, and will secure him the widest influence. To read this book braces and invigorates. His "First Lines of Christian Theology," published after his death, consist of notes of Lectures delivered in the theological chair, and are immeasurably superior to all other works of the class in English: shewing an acquaintance with all kinds of theologic lore, marvellous for extent,

depth and accuracy ; a work more valuable to the student than even an ordinary collection of books,—a library in itself.

Dr. Pye Smith was slender in person, and inclined to tallness. The face had an unusual expression, which seemed to combine masculine vigor and feminine sweetness ; radiant with the intellectual and the moral virtues. His general appearance and bearing were in a high degree fitted to inspire reverence, and both body and mind were characterized by native and acquired refinement. The affliction of deafness during all the last years of life occasioned acute distress to so sociable and loving a spirit. His perception was extraordinarily quick, penetrating and clear, and what was once entrusted to memory was never lost. This may in some measure account for the vastness of his erudition. That John Pye Smith was a mere scholar, is a vulgar error, which no judicious person, who had heard him converse on favorite topics, or who had read his works, would be at all in danger of. He was an original, free, persevering, sagacious, and most honest, thinker ; and while some of the finer and more delicate intellectual excellencies were peculiarly fitted to be discerned and relished by men of culture, there was not wanting masculine energy which could seize and captivate common sense. As a theologian, if he belonged to any, it was to the school of Modern Calvinism ; for he was at first formed by the writings of such as John Howe, Doddridge, Jonathan Edwards, and Edward Williams : but it is evident that, especially in later years, his spirit had more than glimpses of a wider region of thought, where the forms of this divinity are dissolved, and where the vocabulary is unknown.

In extent and accuracy of classical lore few could surpass Dr. Pye Smith. In Biblical and theological learning you might seek far and wide in countries and ages for his peers. Besides the ancient tongues, oriental and classic, he had a good acquaintance with most of the modern European languages. He was one of the first to introduce modern German learning and speculation to the theologians of this country. Yet here, his own early vital experience, and his vigorously sustained Christian godliness, combined with English sagacity, enabled him to discriminate, and preserved him from injury. In Natural science, his favorite study, he ever labored successfully to keep abreast with the most advanced discoveries. It was the love of God which impelled him to study His works. He recognised the same hand in holy writ and in

the hieroglyphs of Nature ; and, whether reading the one or deciphering the other, felt that he was communing with the same Great One. Taken altogether, his learning was immeasurable. To speak soberly, so much and such varied knowledge has hardly existed in any other individual. He was ever acquiring new information. Fondness for acquisition was an early trait, and always remained a ruling passion. Had he lived to the age of a hundred, he would have been learning to the last. This constantly assumed posture of a teachable learner was perhaps conducive to the appearance of extreme humility, which seemed extraordinary in a man of so great learning and reputation.

As a theological tutor, his method was felicitous and successful. He aimed rather at thoroughly exhausting each single topic in succession, and thus shewing his pupils how to work, than at hurrying them over the whole surface. Perhaps no tutor was ever at once so venerated and beloved. Every unbecoming sentiment was rebuked by anticipation, and prevented from manifestation, by the presence of impartial rectitude and charity, a fatherly sympathy, which, in unaffected humility, seemed almost brotherly, and a womanly gentleness and tenderness. Affection for "the blessed Doctor" was the principle which preserved order, the condition of mutual esteem among the students, and in the consciousness of each of them was vitally related to his religion. His holy example and wise counsels had a permanent beneficial influence.

Christian piety was in this case engrafted on a nature most amiable. Within him "the lion and the lamb" dwelt together, as well as the "serpent and the dove." The truths of the Gospel were through long years the daily life of his soul ; and the result was a saintliness almost peerless, of which habitual reverence for the Holy God, dependence on His Grace, gratitude for His mercy, deep humility and self-sacrifice were the main features. His motto was, "Not I but the grace of God."

He had an English passion for freedom. The appearance of injustice awoke indignation and called forth fearful protests. He had a puritan abhorrence of churchly worldliness and priestcraft ; whose utterance was not always restrained even in the midst of the aristocratic circles into which his reputation forced an entrance.

His reputation and influence as a scholar, a man of science

and a saint, were, like his sympathies, world-wide, and, for one in his position, unequalled.

His biography has been congenially written by an old pupil, the Rev. John Medway. While no volume can exceed this in fascination for them who knew Dr. Pye Smith, the size and price will probably stand in the way of popularity. Some enterprising bookseller, would render good service to the world, and one quite in harmony with the character of the man, who should, as in the case of Dr. Kitto, publish a smaller work for general circulation.

It were an injustice to the memory of Dr. Pye Smith to compare him as a scholar with either Dr. Wardlaw or Dr. Payne. In regard to depth of learning, he stood alone in his denomination; and in regard to versatility of mastery and extent of information, he stood alone probably in his country. While the others were respectable in their kind, it would not serve either of them to associate his name with the first. Neither of them possessed a tithe of his acquaintance with the fathers, neither of them knew aught of German learning. We may perhaps regard Payne and Wardlaw as nearly on a level in respect of learning. All that remains then with regard to the three is the question of comparative mental power and achieved result.

We think then that Payne was in original power, superior to Wardlaw. The latter repeated the sentiments of others, the former thought for himself. The latter was technical and cumbrous in conception, often the victim of his own logic; the former more natural and free. While we are aware that the opinion may surprise many, it is nevertheless with us a settled conclusion, the result of long and careful consideration, that, as a thinker, Pye Smith was superior to them both. He excelled in originality and definiteness. Spite of the vastness of his learning, whose weight would have been oppressive, and have hindered the action of an ordinary mind, his moved with masterly freedom, using, not serving, the apparatus of erudition. He could do what Wardlaw seldom did, and Payne not always, look cautiously around on the whole field while engaged with a part of it, and note the relations and bearings of a particular statement on that which was near and on that which was afar. This sometimes made him seem slow, but it was a caution which secured. Neither of them had a spark of genius; his conceptions were not only clear, but glowing.



In self-consecration Payne was, perhaps, more entire than Wardlaw; Pye Smith had more to consecrate than either, and the consecration was most complete. Payne's nature was filled to the brim with godliness; the vessel of Pye Smith was larger, and could contain more.

Wardlaw's name will be henceforth chiefly associated with the service which he rendered to the cause of truth by the exposition and defence of the great principle, that neither the church, as such, has any civil claim on the magistrate, nor has the magistrate, as such, any spiritual claim on the church. His theological works test and modify the old dogmas by scripture; and have tended and will tend to ensure the acceptance of transitionary tenets with those who have previously been the adherents of more rigid orthodoxy. Payne's best works afford fine examples of Biblical theology superseding dogma, and are fitted to implant many a living germ of truth for development in the free soil of unsophisticated minds. As biblical theology is more prized, his name will grow in significance. Pye Smith's has this significance, and much more, in proportion to his greater wideness of operation and splendor of result. He rendered the most efficient aid in the removal of the old traditional conceptions and worn-out terms, and in the inauguration of a new and more living theology; a theology founded in deeper studies of the Divine book and more correct conceptions of man; a theology congenial with the widest discoveries of modern physical science. By voice and by pen he proclaimed through life, more loudly and distinctly than any other of his day, to the Christian, the philosopher, the fruitful principle, that the God of the Bible and the God of Nature is one and the same, and cannot contradict Himself. The manifestation, by this enlightened and saintly spirit, of the harmony and mutual dependence of Christianity and science, was a noble service to both, peculiarly needed in his age, and was the great work of his life.

W. C., M.A.

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# Literary Notices.

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[WE hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

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## THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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THE HEIRS OF THE FARMSTEAD; OR, LIFE IN THE WORSTED DISTRICTS OF YORKSHIRE TWENTY YEARS AGO. A Tale by the Author of "Orphan Upton," &c. London: J. Heaton & Son.

WHETHER it is below the dignity of an ethical aim to use the aid of fiction, and, again, whether it is congenial with a work of art to have an ethical aim, are questions which we think may be settled by adducing the highest examples. The plays of Shakspeare, equal in artistic excellence and in wholesome moral effect, ravish with beauty, and quicken and train the heart, enlarge its vision, and breathe on it a pure and generous spirit of humanity. It is the profest aim of our national epic to

———— assert eternal Providence  
And justify the ways of God to man.

To take the highest of all illustrations; the evangelic parables, having the truest inspiration and the last finish, are the most effective embodiments of ethical truth. While the direct inculcation of the moral is incongruous with the essence of art, which never suffers the lesson to obtrude, far less to be "dragged in by head and shoulders, like Sampson," it is yet true, that genuine art has a moral tendency. For morality is one with the universe; the laws are written on nature,—every raindrop is full of them, every flower illustrates them; much more will the humanities of home and of society. The faithful mirror of nature will therefore exhibit them. Moral truth is the deeper nature of things, and of this art is the manifestation. If you captivate a man with "the beauty of holiness," you have prepared the way for holiness herself. "The Heirs of the Farmstead" has a high moral aim, and uses the aid of genuine art. In graphic distinctness, in truthfulness, in power and in tone, it is Shaksperian. There are vigor and finish. Some of the persons are homely, and stand out in all the rough wildness and jaggedness of nature; some are refined, but all well drawn and skilfully managed. The work is fitted to influence

aright the determination of certain great social, and religious questions, which in the present condition of England are demanding to be settled. It should be read and well pondered by masters and men.

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THOUGHTS FOR THE DEVOUT: being Scriptural Exercises for every day in the Year. Arranged and adapted from the Writings of the Rev. John Howe, M.A. By T. C. Hine. London: John Snow.

THE name of John Howe is known to many who have had no opportunity of knowing his writings; but who, had the obstructions been removed, would have expatiated with delight in these vast regions of thought. Now inasmuch as, spite of the various and obvious hindrances to the general popularity of John Howe's works, they nevertheless abound with passages of exemplary devoutness, holy in feeling, deep in thought, suggestive, to be had for the gathering, it was a good idea and a praiseworthy work, to collect a few of them and arrange them thus. First, we have a passage of Scripture, then a page of comment, for every day in the year. The selection is judicious, and the book well suited to edify Christians of high class, and to extend acquaintance with, and appreciation of, John Howe. If reading of this kind were more general, and books of this class oftener found on closet tables, a bright day would soon dawn on our churches; we should see less of sugary, unprincipled pietism, more of rectitude and holiness, less of dark superstitious devotion, more of intelligent, manly, self-sacrificing godliness.

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THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST—THE POWER OF GOD: the First Sermon preached by the Rev. William Bealby, in Northgate-street Chapel, Bury St. Edmund's. London: Ward and Co., Paternoster Row.

THIS sermon belongs to a type which, as the people advance in general intelligence and independent thinking, must supersede those wordy, dogmatic, animally unctuous, somniferous sermons, which pious people buy and try to read because they are sermons. Discourses like this, so fresh in thought, so angular in shape, so suggestive in sentiment, so genial in spirit, so compact in make and small in compass, will insure a sympathetic perusal. Sermons which you can compass in a few minutes, and which contain thoughts that will grow for ever in the soil of our own nature, are the sermons we want.

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HIDDEN LIFE; Memorials of John Whitmore Winslow. By his Father, Octavius Winslow, D.D. London: John Farquhar Shaw. A lovingly written memoir of an amiable and pious youth, who appears to have been held dear, during his short life, by many beyond the circle

of his family, and whose mysterious and distressing removal has probably extended the interest of his name. **THE CENTRE AND CIRCLE OF EVANGELICAL RELIGION; OR, PERFECT LOVE;** also a **NEW SERIES OF TRACTS.** By Richard Poole. Nos. I.—VI. Jarrold and Sons. The author of these little works is known as a zealous, lively and useful preacher. They appear to have in a high degree all the excellencies, with few of the faults, of his sermons. We like the tracts better than the book. That on "The Prodigal" is pithy, and faithful to the spirit of the text, and the tracts generally are superior to most. We regard their appearance as a favorable token, and think that, were they widely circulated, good might result. With respect in particular to "The Centre and the Circle," &c., we have a word for the writer. Do not waste energy in proving against imaginary antagonists what, essentially, is doubted by none. Avoid unpractical questions, and try to forget worn out polemics. Use the metropolitan speech of the City of God. **A COMPENDIUM OF ANCIENT HISTORY;** Two Thousand Questions on the Old and New Testaments. By the same author. Jarrold and Sons. These are small and cheap, but good. Amongst the many works intended for children, but few are really suitable;—and these are of the few. We earnestly commend them both to parents and schoolmasters, and the latter to Sunday-school teachers. **THE BRITISH WORKMAN.** This is a penny illustrated paper for "British Workmen;" and a marvellous production of intellectual, artistic, and moral excellence it is. The pencil and the pen are here wielded with consummate ability in order to convey in the most enchanting and effective manner the divinest sentiments of morality and religion to the people. We would have its circulation increased a thousand-fold. May the Great One bless and prosper it abundantly! **PRECIOUS PROMISES.** By the Rev. A. E. Lord. Judd and Glass. This is an evangelical discourse, not of the sickly simpering sort, but of a healthy and vigorous order. It has in it the manhood of piety and thought. **CHILDREN AT CHURCH;** being Six Simple Sermons. By J. Erskine Clarke, M.A., Vicar of St. Michael's, Derby. Second Series. London: Nisbet and Co. We hail with pleasure this second series of Mr. Clarke's inimitable sermons for children. He who can write for children what children will really read—for there is much written for them now-a-days too stale and dull for their little souls to relish—occupies in the moral and social realm a position of honor and responsibility second to none. He sits at the fountain-head of social influence, and colors and directs the streams. Every parent who seeks the spiritual good of his children, should put these little volumes into their hands.

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# A HOMILY

ON

## Paul "driven up and down in Adria;" or, the Voyage of Life.

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• "And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing into Italy; and he put us therein," &c. Acts xxvii. 6—44.

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MAN'S life is a book: a book "in the right hand" of the ever-blessed One; and "written within and without." It is full. The spirit and type of all man's future history are inscribed upon its mystic page. "In thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." Life is its own interpreter. It proclaims its own facts and writes its own comments. In the light of life, life only can be understood. My past experience is a commentary on my being: it is in the light reflected from my by-gone days that I see my present self. So of my race. I see the world in the rays that beam from the ages that are gone. Its historic events, are "ensamples," and "are written for our admonition."

There are some events in history that throw much more light on human life than others. Some only throw a glimmering ray upon some one phase and sphere; others seem to light up the whole realm and radiate on all sides. Such is Paul's stormy and perilous voyage over the Adriatic billows, as graphically portrayed in the chapter before us. Far indeed am I from a taste for, or a belief in, what is called the "spiritualizing" method of treating God's book. I deprecate such a method as a sad and impious perversion; but to

look upon its historic records in order to interpret life is, I think, both legitimate and wise. When I look upon Paul, with two hundred and seventy-five other men of various tribes, social grades, and religious sects, on board a frail barque, struggling through many cloudy days and starless nights in the fierce tempest, I discover much which throws light upon a whole generation of men. This globe is a ship crowded with passengers; all are battling with the fierce storms of time, as the ship bears them through seas of ether on their way to a destiny eternal.

Thus using the narrative before us, I observe:—

I. THAT IN THE VOYAGE OF LIFE WE HAVE A GREAT VARIETY IN OUR CONTEMPORARIES. On board this vessel that was “now driven up and down in Adria, exceedingly tossed with a tempest,” there was no less than two hundred and seventy-five souls with Paul; and they were of a very mixed character. There were the rough, weather-beaten sailors, with might and main endeavoring to guide the barque, which bounded on the swelling billows like a maddened steed amidst moving mountains; there were merchants on their way from Egypt to Italy, some to buy, others to sell, and all in quest of gain; there were “prisoners,” in the custody of the stern officers of Roman law, who had either been convicted of crime and were on their way to execution, or were on the way to Rome to be tried at the tribunal of the Emperor himself. There were soldiers, men trained for murder on a gigantic scale, and taught to regard a bloody crime as the most illustrious virtue. Luke, the physician, the evangelist and historian was there; and so was Aristarchus, one of Paul’s most faithful friends. Indeed, on board this storm-tossed barque you have a whole age, a whole generation in miniature. Almost all the social forces of an age are in that vessel. There is Labor represented in the sailors, there is War in the soldiers, there is Commerce in the merchants, there is Law in the men who hold the prisoners in custody, there are Literature and Science in Luke, there is Religion in



Paul and Aristarchus, as well as Luke. So varied, indeed, were the companions of Paul in their tendencies, tastes, habits and aims, that amidst the numbers there could, I think, be but little society. Though in close material contact, they lived in spiritual worlds remote from each other;—worlds lighted, warmed, and ruled, by different centres.

In all this, you have a mirror of the human world at the present moment. In our voyage through time, we are thrown in the district, in which our lot is cast, amongst contemporaries between whom there are such immense *accidental* differences, that instead of souls meeting and mingling together in sweet and harmonious intercourse, there are but few instances, comparatively, in which you have any spiritual contact. Each has his own little world and interests. Like Paul, we are thrown amongst numerous contemporaries, but there are only a few Lukes or Aristarchuses amongst them, with whom we can have much intercourse. If we are of the Christianly true, "The world knoweth us not." Our sphere of being as far transcends the ken of worldlings, as planets that roll beyond telescopic vision. A man morally must *be* what he would understand. He must be a saint to understand a saint, a devil to understand a devil. The Tyrant, the Pope, the Philanthropist, the Christian, are little else than sounds to men who have not the elements that form these characters in their own hearts. Morally no man *can* be judged but by his own peers.

Now this immense spiritual variety amongst our fellow-voyagers, or, without trope, amongst our contemporaries in this life, is to a reflective mind suggestive of certain important considerations.

First : *It suggests a characteristic of human nature as distinguished from all other terrestrial life.* Natural history shows that there is a perfect correspondence in the tastes, impulses and habits, among all the members of any species of non-rational life. To understand one of the individuals is to understand the entire species. The same external influences produce on all the same results. Their *conscious* life is the



same. They move within the same circle ; not one has power to take one step beyond the boundary line. Not so with man. Each individual has the power of striking out an orbit for himself ; an orbit in some respects different from that in which any one had ever moved before or will ever move again. Wonderful in this respect is the power of a moral creature. A self-determining, self-transfiguring, power is his. All modes of life are possible to man. He can transmigrate into the grub, the seraph or the fiend. That living soul which is breathed into our material frames at first, may through this sensuous body work itself into a beast, like Nebuchadnezzar ; a devil, like Herod ; or an apostle, like Paul.

Secondly: *It suggests that mankind are not now in their original condition.* The power to form different modes and spheres of life is confessedly a distinguishing gift of our being ; but to use that power inconsistently with the Royal Law of benevolence is the essence of sin and the source of ruin. Power is the gift of God, and is a blessing ; the employment of it is the prerogative of man, and may be either a virtue and a blessing, or a sin and a curse. It can never be that the God of Love and Order intended that our innate moral energy should be so employed as to create such an immense variety in the tastes, tendencies and aims of our contemporaries as to render social intercourse and harmony impossible. The Divine idea of humanity seems to be this, that all souls should have a common centre, and that in all their revolutions, their social radiations, borrowed from a common source, should genially and harmoniously blend, intermingle and combine. Some great catastrophe has befallen man's social system ;—a catastrophe which has hurled souls from the normal centre, into regions of darkness and confusion. The Bible explains this.

Thirdly: *It suggests the probability of a future social classification.* Will such men as Paul, Luke, Aristarchus, be doomed for ever to live with mercenary merchants, besotted seamen, and bloody soldiers? Shall good men, whose deepest prayer is, "Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life

with bloody men," dwell for ever with such companions? Is the world to go on for ever thus? Are the Herods to continue kings, and the Johns prisoners? Are the Pauls ever to be at the mercy of centurions? Are the Jeffreys to be on the bench and the Baxters at the bar for ever? It cannot be. Man's deepest intuitions say it cannot be; the prayers of the good say it cannot be, and the Bible says it shall not be. The tares and the wheat will one day be separated—the good and the bad one day divided. We are only mixed while on board this earth: as soon as we touch the shores of the retributive and everlasting, we separate on the principles of moral character and spiritual affinities. Blessed be God! there is a world in which the "nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it;" and into which there shall "in no wise enter anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life:" a world outside of which will be "dogs and sorcerers, and whoremongers and murderers, and idolators, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

From this narrative I observe:—

II. THAT IN THE VOYAGE OF LIFE THE SEVEREST TRIALS ARE COMMON TO ALL. The one trial common to all on board that barque was the danger of losing life. Luke's description of their common trial is very graphic. "And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away." They tried every expedient, but all failed; the lamp of hope for a time went out. Their souls were in despair; as dark were they as those heavens that had not seen "sun nor stars for many days." Danger of life is universally felt to be the severest of trials. Death is "the king of terrors." It is that which gives terror to every other terror. And to this trial all are exposed in a thousand different ways every day. All the individuals, families, tribes, nations of the earth, at the present moment, are like Paul and his companions on

an ever surging sea, battling for life. The clouds of death darken every sky; its gales breathe about all. Some, it is true, are in more immediate and conscious contact with death than others, and their struggles are more severe. But all, every hour, are in danger, and all must one day, like Paul and his companions, feel "all hope" of being saved from death taken away. For a short time, in healthy youth and vigorous manhood, you may flow on propitiously like this vessel in the first stage of its voyage, when "the south wind blew softly;" gentle gales awhile, my brother, may fill thy sails, and flattering seas may smile: but farther on, the sea will rise to mountains and marshal its billows against thee; the winds will grow wild with fury, the sun will set, the moon go down, and every star disappear, and thou shalt feel thyself only as a bubble on the breakers.

"Sure a time will come  
For storms to try thee and strong blasts to rend  
Thy painted sails, and spread thy gold like chaff  
O'er the wild wave; and what a wreck—  
If judgment find thee unsustain'd by God!"

There are two thoughts suggested by the common trials of men.

First: *That they develop different dispositions.* How different were the feelings of Paul, Luke, and Aristarchus, from the others. This storm blew open as it were the doors of their hearts, and disclosed the moral stuff they were made of. In all, perhaps, on board, save Paul and his two spiritual brothers, there was a wild tempest of terrific emotion, of which the outward storm was not merely the occasion, but the material type. Fear had unmanned them all; so that for fourteen days they could eat nothing:—"they continued fasting." Even the brave sailors were at their wits end;—they sought "to flee out of the ship." None of them thought of anything but their own safety. Selfishness, the source of all fear, and indeed evermore the source of all painful feeling, had in them risen to a passion. What cared the sailors now who perished, so long as they were saved? The soldiers too

displayed their base and heartless selfishness ; for they proposed to “ kill the prisoners ” rather than they should have the slightest chance of escape. In sublime contrast with all this was the spirit of Paul, and we presume of his two companions in the faith. None of these things seemed to have moved him. The whole of his conduct, as here recorded, during these fourteen eventful days, was characterized by a magnanimity which can only take its rise in a vital alliance with the Infinite, and a benevolent sympathy for mankind. His every word shows an unfaltering faith in Him to whom he had committed himself. His bearing too was calm and hope-inspiring. His great nature was taken up with the sufferings of his companions ; he seemed to have no care for himself. “ I pray you,” said he, “ take some meat, for this is for your health.” Severe trials, especially those which powerfully threaten life, are sure to develop the moral dispositions of men. Never did the faithless, ungenerous, selfish, dastardly nature of the Jews, as a whole people, show itself so fully as when they stood in front of the Red Sea, with unscaleable heights on both sides, and the avenging Pharaoh and his host swiftly advancing in the rear. They said to Moses, their friend and temporal deliverer, “ Because there were no graves in Egypt hast thou taken us away to die in the Wilderness ? ” In this one utterance their base natures leap into daylight. So it ever is. The trials of life reveal the dispositions of the heart ; they take off the mask, they strip off all shams, and show us to ourselves and the universe. Trials test our principles as fire tries the minerals.

Secondly : *That they develop the indifference of nature to social distinctions.* Nature cares nothing for any of the distinctions amongst men. The centurion and his subordinates, the prisoners and the officers, the Christians and heathens, were all treated alike on board this vessel. Old ocean cares no more for the boats with which Xerxes bridged the Hellespont than for any worthless log of timber. It heeds no more the voice of Canute than the cries of a pauper's babe. Nature knows nothing of your lords and

kings. The ocean in her majesty of wrath cares nothing for your Cæsars. "Napoleon," says Mr. Lowe in his eloquent little work, 'The Pilot of the Galilean Lake,' "was once made to feel his littleness and impotence when at the height of his power and glory, in a storm at sea, off Boulogne. His mighty fleet lay before him, proudly riding at anchor. Wishing to review it in the open sea, he desired Admiral Bruyes to change the position of the ships. Foreseeing that a fearful storm was gathering, the Admiral respectfully declined obedience to the Emperor's commands. The ominous stillness of the atmosphere, the darkening sky, the lowering clouds, the rumbling of distant thunder, fully justified the fears entertained by the Admiral. But Napoleon, in a rage, peremptorily demanded obedience to his iron will. Vice-Admiral Magon obeyed the order. The threatening storm burst with terrible fury. Several gun sloops were wrecked, and above two hundred poor soldiers and sailors were plunged in the raging waves, very few of whom escaped. The Emperor instantly ordered the boats out to the rescue of the perishing crews. He was told, 'No boat could live in such a sea.' He then ordered a company of his grenadiers to man the boats, and as he sprang the first into a large boat, exclaimed, 'follow me, my brave fellows.' They had scarcely entered the boat, before a huge wave dashed over the Emperor, as he stood erect, near the helmsman. 'Onward! onward!' he cried; his voice swelling above the tempest's roar. But the daring effort was vain; progress in such a sea was impossible. 'Push on! push on!' cried Napoleon; 'do you not hear those cries? Oh this sea! this sea!' he exclaimed, clenching his hands; it rebels against our power, but it may be conquered!' At this moment a mighty billow struck the boat with tremendous force, and drove it back, quivering, to the shore. It seemed as though this were the ocean's answer; or rather the answer of the God of the ocean, to the proud monarch's boast! Napoleon was cast ashore by the spurning billows of the stormy sea, like a drifting fragment of dripping sea-weed."



Nature's indifference, however, to mere *secular* distinction, is not so strange as her want of respect to the moral. She paid no deference to the good men now on board ; she looked down as indignantly on Paul and his two Christian friends as on the rest. She hid her stars, and made her winds and waves dash with the same wild fury around the heads of all. Nature treats apostles and apostates alike. The sun shines alike, and the showers descend alike, upon the just and the unjust. Nature knows nothing here of moral retributions. Her fires will burn, her waters will drown, and her poisons destroy, the good as well as the bad. Our character and moral position in the universe are not to be estimated by nature's aspect towards us. "The Tower of Siloam" may fall on the good as well as on the bad ; children may be "born blind" of righteous parents as well as of wicked. The ground of wicked men may bring forth plentifully while the soil of the good man be struck with barrenness. As far as the system of nature is concerned, "All things come alike to all : there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked ; to the good, and to the clean, and to the unclean ; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not." She has her own system of laws ; he who attends to them most loyally, let him be vile as hell can make him, shall enjoy most of her bounties and smiles. In this respect she is an emblem of the moral system. Both are impartial. Both treat their subjects according to their conduct towards them, not according to their conduct towards anything else. Neither shows respect to any man's person : the great cardinal dictum of each is, "He that doeth the wrong shall suffer for the wrong."

From this narrative I observe :—

III. THAT IN THE VOYAGE OF LIFE SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM GOD ARE MERCIFULLY VOUCHSAFED. "And now I exhort you to be of good cheer : for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and



whom I serve, Saying, Fear not, Paul ; thou must be brought before Cæsar ; and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." The great God knew the fearful situation of the vessel—the dire perils to which Paul and his companions were exposed, and mercifully interposed. It is even so with our world. He knows the moral difficulties and dangers to which we are subjected, through sin, on our voyage to eternity, and He has graciously vouchsafed the necessary communications for our relief. Between the divine communication vouchsafed to the men on board this vessel, and that which in the bible God hath given this world, there are certain points of instructive resemblance.

First : *The divine communication to the men on board this vessel came through the best of the men.* Paul was the selected medium of communication. It was not one of the influential merchants, not the commander and owner of the ship, nor even the Roman centurion ; but Paul, the prisoner—the heretic—the outcast. There was no man on board the ship, probably, in a more abject condition than he. Notwithstanding his secular abjectness he was a *good* man. There was no one on board of such high spiritual excellence. He was God's.—“ Whose I am, and whom I serve.” This was the reason for his selection as an organ of divine communication. God has ever spoke to the world through the best men. It matters not how poor they are, if good. He speaks to them and makes them His messengers. “ The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant.” What is the bible but communications which God addresses to the world through holy men “ who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost ? ” Moral goodness alone can qualify a man for this. The divine voice can only be heard by the holy ; the carnal mind “ discerneth not the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned.” “ Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.”

Secondly : *The divine communications which came to the men on board this vessel were the final and effective means of*

*meeting the emergency.* The maritime genius and energy of all on board had been taxed to the utmost, and all in vain. Finding at the outset of the tempest that they could not direct the vessel through the full fury of the storm, they "let her drive," gave her as much sea-room as possible, and yielded her up to the mercy of the elements : then having ran under "a certain island," they used their best efforts to bind up the shattered ship. When they had taken up the boat, "they used helps, undergirding the ship ; and, fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail, and so were driven." They took down the sails, and, perhaps, the masts and yards, and bound the vessel round with ropes and cables. Still she was "exceedingly tossed." They then lightened her, committing to the waves part of her precious cargo. Still the tempest continued. Next and last they threw "the tacklings" overboard. "And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away." Now it was while in this hopeless state that the communication came. After human effort had exhausted its powers, then God interposed. It is so with the Gospel. It was after human reason had tried every effort to solve the stormy problems of the conscience, and guide the soul into the haven of spiritual peace, that Christ came. "You may see," says Culverwell, a writer whose thoughts are ever fresh because always real and earnest,—"*Socrates in the twilight lamenting his obscure and benighted condition, and telling you that his lamp will show him nothing but his own darkness. You may see Plato sitting down by the water of Lethe, and weeping because he could not remember his former notions. You may hear Aristotle bewailing himself thus, that his 'potential reason' will so seldom come into act, that his 'blank sheet' has so few and such imperfect impressions upon it, that his intellectuals are at so low an ebb, as that the motions of Euripus will pose them. You may hear Zeno say that his 'porch' is dark ; and Epictetus confessing and*

complaining that he had not the right 'handle,' the true apprehension of things."

Thirdly : *The efficacy of these communications depended upon a practical attention to the directions.* "There shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship ;" yet, though this is the purpose, "unless these," the sailors, who understand how to manage the ship, "abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved."

The practical lesson I learn from this is, *that every promise which God makes to man should be regarded as conditional, unless a most unequivocal assurance is given to the contrary.* Paul regarded the promise, that all on board should be saved, as depending upon the right employment of the suitable means. Hence he captured by his orders the affrighted seamen as they were attempting to abandon the wrecking vessel. "Unless these," these men, who alone amongst us understand nautical matters, "abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." But what reason had Paul to regard the promise as *conditional* ? There was no *if* in it,—it is most positive and unqualified : "There shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship." It does not contain, does not suggest, a hint about means. What reason had he therefore to understand the promise as conditional ? Every reason. His natural instincts, his experience and observation, and all analogy, satisfied him that divine ends are always reached by means ; that God carries on His universe by an inviolable principle of connexion between means and ends. Unless, therefore, the great God who worketh all things, makes to man a promise of good with the most unequivocal and emphatic assurance that it will come without means, he sins against his own reason and against the established system of the universe in so interpreting it. Thus understanding His promises, they afford no pretext for a Calvinistic carelessness. Has God promised knowledge ? It implies study. Has He promised salvation ? It implies "repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."

From this narrative I observe :—

IV. THAT IN THE VOYAGE OF LIFE ONE MORALLY GREAT MAN, HOWEVER POOR, IS OF IMMENSE SERVICE TO HIS CONTEMPORARIES. Let us notice these things :—

First : *The characteristics of a truly great man as illustrated in Paul's history on board the vessel.* Observe his *forecast*. At the very outset he had a presentiment of the danger which awaited them. "Sirs," said he to the officers, "I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives." But these men, "dressed in a little brief authority," paid of course no attention to the statement of a poor prisoner. "The centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship more than those things which were spoken by Paul." One can imagine the old captain looking with proud contempt at Paul, and saying, What does he know about nautical matters? he is one of those poor timid landmen that we brave sailors often have to deal with on board. They see danger in every approaching wave; in every turn of the vessel they fancy they are going down. Poor cowards! I wish those timid landmen would mind their own business. I know how to manage my gallant ship; I have steered her through fiercer storms, and more perilous waves than these! Hush! captain, that poor prisoner, Paul, has a *sensibility* which enables him to see nature and interpret her as thou canst never do.

An *intense sympathy* with a man's principles and aims will enable me to foresee and predict much of his future conduct. *Godliness*, the soul of all moral greatness, is this sympathy. It is such a close and vital alliance with the Eternal Spirit, as enables the soul to feel the very pulsations of the Divine Being, and to anticipate His doings. This sympathy with God is the prophetic eye. Give me this, and like Isaiah, in some humble measure, I shall foretell the ages. This sympathy is a new faculty—a new eye to the soul. Because of this, Paul saw what the captain could not. His

heart was in such a contact with that Spirit which controls the winds and the waves that he felt that something terrible was about to transpire. The first motion as it were of the Great Spirit of nature in waking this tempest vibrated through his heart. Moral greatness, because it is godliness, has always forecast : it "foreseeth the evil." Never let us disregard the warnings of a great and godly man.

Observe his *magnanimous calmness*. We have already referred to this. Paul displays no perturbation ; his spirit seems as unruffled by the storms as those stars that roll in placid brightness beyond the black tempestuous clouds :—stars, whose peaceful faces he had not seen "for many days." Indeed, he had such an exuberance of calm courage, that when the storm was at its height, he breathed a cheerful spirit into the agitated hearts of all, and got them to feast with him in the tempest :—"Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took some meat." A man must be sublimely calm to breathe calmness into the agitated hearts of all these men in the fury of the tempest. Trust in God was the philosophy of his remarkable calmness. He could sing with David, "God is our refuge and strength, a very pleasant help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea : though the waters roar with the swelling thereof."

Observe his *self-obliviousness*. Whilst all others were struggling for themselves, he seemed only concerned for them ; though, for the most part, they stood in an antagonistic position towards him. He was a prisoner in the custody of Roman officers. The vessel was bearing him not to his home, not to a scene of friendship, but to that of punishment and death. He did not seem to think of this. His own trying circumstances did not appear to affect him : he was careful for others ; he had the "charity that seeketh not her own."

Observe, moreover, his *religiousness*. "He took bread and gave thanks to God in presence of them all." This ex-



plains his greatness. He felt that God with him. He saw God in the tempest and in the bread. He bowed in resignation to the one,—he thanked Him for the other. Whilst his piety would not allow him to complain of the greatest trial, it prompted him greatly and devoutly to acknowledge the smallest favor.

Secondly : *The service which he rendered was both direct and indirect.* The spirit of confidence which he breathed, the efforts he put forth, the directions he gave, were all direct. Then the *indirect* service was great. For the sake of Paul the prisoners were not killed. “And the soldiers’ counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out, and escape. But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose ; and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea and get to land. One might have thought that the common trials which they had endured would have softened, in some measure, their brutal natures into genial sympathy. But as soldiers they had been trained to a reckless disregard of life, and to deeds of cruelty. By habits of carnage the spirit of humanity had been expelled from their breasts, and the tiger-nature had become theirs. The particular reason however for this bloodthirsty suggestion was, probably, the fear that should they escape, they themselves would be charged either with unfaithfulness or negligence by the military authorities at Rome,—their masters. The poor prisoners however were saved from this fate for the sake of Paul. “The centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose.” The signal service which Paul had rendered conciliated the centurion. For Paul’s sake the prisoners were saved. None but the Great One can tell the benefits, not only directly but *indirectly* that a *good* man confers upon his contemporaries. On the great day of account it will be found that many an obscure saint has conferred far greater service on the age in which he lived, and the race to which he belonged, than those illustrious generals, statesmen, poets, and sages, who have won the acclamations of



posterity. The world has yet to learn who are its true benefactors.

The service of a *good man is appreciated as trials increase*. In the first stage of the voyage, when "the south winds blew softly," Paul was nothing. When he uttered his impression of danger, he was treated, probably, if not with insolence, yet with indifference. "The centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul." But as the storm advanced Paul's influence increased. Like all truly great men he rose into more majestic attitude as difficulties thickened. The merchants, the soldiers, and the centurion, who were very great men, no doubt, in their way, and were conventionally regarded as great in their own departments on land ; and who, perhaps, in their own circle would not condescend to speak to Paul, grew less and less as the tempest rose. Your conventionally great men are only great in fair weather. But the truly great become greater in storms. Paul, who at the outset, when "the south winds blew softly," was nothing in that vessel, became the moral commander during the tempest. Amidst the wild roaring of the elements, the cries of his fellow voyagers, the crashes of the plunging ship, the awful howl of death in all, he walked upon the cracking deck with a moral majesty, before which, captain, merchant, soldier, and centurion, bowed with loyal awe. So it has ever been ; so it must ever be. The good show their greatness in trials ; and in trials, the evil, however exalted their worldly position, are compelled to appreciate them. How often do the world's great men, on death-beds, seek the attendance, sympathies, counsel, and prayers of those godly ones whom they despised in health !

Brothers ! we are on a voyage. Thank God ! that whilst various worthless classes are sailing with us, and we are destined to meet with storms in which they can render us no help, yet in the Bible "the angel of God" hath appeared unto us, and hath given us a *conditional* promise that "there shall be no loss of any man's life." Let the fiercest tempest arise,

let winds and waves dash about us with utmost fury, yet if we follow the counsels of this Angel-Book, and rightly employ the skill and energy we possess, we shall, though "on boards and broken pieces of the ship," escape "all safe to land."

"Give thy mind sea-room, keep it wide of earth,  
That rock of souls immortal ; let loose thy cord  
Weigh anchor ; spread thy sails ; call every wind ;  
Eye thy great pole-star ; make the land of life."

"Land a-head ! its fruits are waving  
On the hills of fadeless green,  
And the living waters laving  
Shores where heavenly forms are seen."

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## The Genius of the Gospel.

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ABLE expositions of the Gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities alluded to by the inspired writers ; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanted amongst us. But the eduction of its widest truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach ; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographic, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim ; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of scriptural study, but to reveal its spiritual results.

FORTIETH SECTION. Matt. xiii. 10—17.

SUBJECT :—*The Revealment of the Gospel.*

THE two last paragraphs of the preceding chapter, and the first in this, we pass over in this series of articles now, because they have been discussed already in the Homilist under the titles "God's Word and Man's Soul ;"\* "Defective Reformation ;"† and "Spiritual and Material Relationship."‡

The subject which the present paragraph presents is *The Revealment of the Gospel* ; and it gives us three things in relation to this revealment which we shall notice with the

See Homilist, \*vol. 2, p. 261. † vol. 2, p. 332. ‡ vol. 6, p. 428.

utmost brevity :—The evident necessity of its revelation ; the parabolic method of its revelation ; and the different spiritual results of its revelation.

I. THE EVIDENT NECESSITY OF ITS REVELAMENT. “ And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou in parables ? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.” The mysteries of the kingdom may be regarded as meaning the *elements of the Gospel*,—its cardinal truths and provisions : these, until they are revealed, are *secrets*, or mysteries. It is important to remark, that there is a distinction between the Gospel, and its revelation. The Gospel is something existing independent of revelation. As astronomy is something independent of all astronomical books, as geometrical truths are independent of Euclid, so the Gospel existed before a revelation. There are the germs of many sciences existing in the world that have as yet found no revelation. But apart from the revelation the Gospel would be a *secret*—a mastery. The principle, the manifestation, and the personal application of the Gospel, are all mysteries until revealed. The principle is God’s love for apostate man ; the manifestation is the incarnation of Christ ; the application is the work of the Spirit.

Now, the necessity of its revelation will appear obvious from these three facts :—

First : *That the Gospel can only benefit us as it is believed.* Faith in its “ mysteries ” or secrets, is the necessary condition of spiritual salvation. It is no arbitrary arrangement which leaves our destiny dependent on faith. “ He that believeth shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned.”

Secondly : *That there can be no belief without knowledge.* We have no faith, we can have no faith, in anything that has not come within the range of our consciousness. “ How can they believe in Him of whom they have not heard ? ”

Thirdly : *That without a revelation the realities of the Gospel could never have been known.* The truths of the Gospel are

not, like the truths of science, written on the pages of nature for men to decipher and to interpret. They transcend human discovery. "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard," &c. From these three facts the necessity for a revealment is obvious.

II. THE PARABOLIC METHOD OF ITS REVEALMENT. Christ, in order to reveal the "mysteries," the cardinal elements of the Gospel, dealt largely in parables. There is a rich cluster of them in this one chapter. Instead of enunciating them in mere logical propositions, He brings them out from the realm of abstraction, clothes them in a body, and makes men see, feel, and hear them. We have thus the *reason* of this parabolic method. In answer to the question, "Why speakest thou to them in parables?" Christ replies, "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." "Therefore speak I to them in parables, because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not," &c. The reason is, *the spiritual obtuseness of sinners*. I am aware that many expositors, Olshausen and Doddridge amongst them, interpret the words of our Saviour as meaning that He taught in parables *in order to conceal* His meaning from His ungodly hearers. I cannot entertain this thought, for the following reasons:—

First: *The language does not necessarily imply this idea*. Jesus does not say, I speak to them in parables because I want to hide from them my meaning,—want to render more dense the atmosphere, more impenetrable the veil of their hearts. No, He says that it is because they are already so blind that He thus teaches. He gives parables not to produce moral obliquity, but because moral obliquity existed; "they seeing see not," &c.\*

\* Ver. 13. "Therefore speak I to them *in parables*: this direct answer to the question of the disciples has hitherto, it is to be regretted, received very generally a one-sided explanation from the following  $\text{ἐτι}$ ; although it must first of all be understood as an evident consequence from the *foregoing*  $\text{ἐτι}$ , together with all that follows. How has this truth, as earnest as it is friendly, been obscured by the one-

Secondly : *This idea is essentially inconsistent with the nature of parabolical teaching.* The very nature and design of a parable are to make an obscure truth clear,—to *illustrate*. Had He spoken in intricate allegories and enigmas, or in scholastic technicalities, there might be some show of reason in supposing that Christ spoke in order to conceal.

Thirdly : *This idea is incompatible with the character and mission of Christ.* Does it comport with His kindness to suppose that He sought to intensify the darkness of the human spirit? An attempt on Christ's part to do this would have been superfluous and inconsistent with all our notions of His character and purpose. We hold therefore to the principle that He taught in parables because of the existing spiritual *obtuseness* of His hearers. Had their spiritual institutions been clear they would have caught His meaning by a simple sentence, and they would not have required such time spent in illustrations.

Besides making divine truth clear to the ignorant, parables serve other subordinate and auxiliary purposes. (1) They serve to reflect the manners and customs of the ancients. Christ's parables are pictures taken from olden times.

sided explanation which has been given to it ; as if Christ here speaks to them in parables, *in order that they may not understand !* Only read what the very unjustly slighted Mark (iv. 33), says truly by the Holy Ghost : He spake the word to them *as they were able to hear it.* (Compare John viii. 43.) Does that mean 'not understand ;' Christ does not merely say in what follows, as will soon appear ; 'Therefore speak I to them in parables, *because they do not understand ;*' nor has he in ver. 12 said, 'Therefore, *that they may not understand.*' Either of these as separated from the other is 'in no sense a justifiable idea ;'—the latter still less so than the former. The truth takes both together, as Christ's word here stand between what precedes and what follows. Does Christ then speak purposely to the wind ? Are not parables given to be heard? and if they may yet possibly be rightly heard to be understood. Christ does not light His lamp in vain, as He assures us in Mark, ver. 21, 23. To what purpose is it then that He lets it shine until the night comes when none can see to work, and that He so patiently and diligently instructs this people also even to the last ?,"—See STIER on "*The words of the Lord Jesus.*"



(2) They serve to show the mercy of Jesus in thus condescending to meet the benighted condition of our minds. (3) They serve to invest the Bible with all the charms of variety and life. Christ's teachings, being parabolical, are full of nature and human life. (4) They seem to show the importance of adapting our methods of teaching to the conditions and capacities of our hearers.

III. THE DIFFERENT SPIRITUAL RESULTS OF ITS REVELMENT. The passage teaches that there is a difference both in the *kind* and *degree* of the result.

First : *There is a difference in the kind of result.* Some perceive it, and some do not ; "seeing they see not, hearing they hear not." Some feel it and some do not. Their heart is "gross," their ears are "dull," their eyes are "closed." Man has a threefold vision :—the sensuous, the intellectual, and the spiritual. The last is that which makes the object real, brings it home to the heart, and makes it part of our nature. Unless a man sees the Gospel in the best sense, he is injured by it, he seeing, sees not. The Gospel ministry is a damning as well as a saving process. It has made millions of Pharaohs.

In these two opposite results it is important to remember three things. (1) The Gospel benefits by design ;—it does not injure by design. (2) The Gospel benefits by adaptation ;—it does not injure by adaptation. It has no aptitude for this. (3) The Gospel benefits by divine influence ;—it does not injure by divine influence.

Secondly : *There is a difference in the degree.* "Many prophets and righteous men desired to see those things which ye see," &c. The disciples had a fuller manifestation, and a richer enjoyment, of the Gospel than the prophets and righteous men of whom Christ speaks.

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# G e r m s   o f   T h o u g h t .

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SUBJECT :—*Christ our Life.*

“When Christ who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” Col. iii. 4.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Eighty-fifth.

Two thoughts are suggested when we contemplate life. (1) It is the most *manifest* of all things—it crowds the globe. Beasts, birds, insects, fishes, trees, flowers, hills, vales, rivers, seas,—every clod of earth, every drop of water are full of it. All our food, clothing, fuel, furniture, lights, books, the very stones of our dwellings,—almost everything we use, have been eliminated for us by life, and are made out of life’s cast-off clothes. Think of this. (2) It is the most *mysterious* of all things. Nobody has ever defined it. It baffles all analysis. Dissect a plant or animal to find out its life, and you only destroy what you seek. All we can say is, that, like God, it is most known and most unknown. Tell me that you see nothing of life, or that you see all, or tell me that of it which lies buried in mystery, is not infinitely more than that of which lies open to vision, and you convict yourself of absurdity.

Now observe, the manifest is that side of life which is material, and lies *man-ward* and appeals to our senses. The mysterious is that side of life which shades off into the immaterial and lies *God-ward*, and appeals to our spirit alone.

Now if you have well weighed these things, observe how they lift out before your thought the sense of this scripture, “Christ is our life.” What human light, what divine darkness are in it when viewed as a manifestation and a mystery! Is it not the “pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night?”

I. CONSIDER CHRIST OUR LIFE AS AN ATONEMENT FOR SIN. Begin with the mystery in this. What is the relation of the atonement to God? Why was sin permitted? Why did God require an atonement? How could one divine person make an atonement for another? Or what do you know about these persons at all? These are mysteries, where the eye of your thought is rayless, and the tongue of your reason is dumb. You can only cry out "Oh, the depths," &c. Mind, I do not say we know nothing here, but that temerity and sacrilege alone will affirm we know all.

But now look at this truth on its human side. Here it is palpable and manifest enough. I can understand innocence charging itself with guilt, the free man taking the culprit's clothes and cell, that the prisoner may go free. Penalty may be vicariously endured. Nor am I taught this by what I observe among men, or by sacrificial rituals only:—I can feel it touch my spirit,—I am full of guilt and misery. My misery cries to God, "ἐλέησον," but this is not enough. My guilt cries out ἰλάσθητι. It is Christ's atonement alone that puts out the hell-fires of my burning conscience, and kindles the seraph flame of my intensest love, Thus "great is the *mystery* of godliness," "God was *manifest* in the flesh."

II. CONSIDER CHRIST OUR LIFE AS AN ENERGY. "Christ liveth in me," &c. "Except a man be born of the Spirit," &c. "Not by might, nor by power," &c. What mystery is here! Has God's spirit nothing to do with moral life, while in nature He is the sole, all-diffused, mighty vitality? I cannot move my body without God: can I my soul? But how does His Spirit act on mine? "The wind bloweth where it listeth," &c. If the moral difference among men is ultimately referrible to God's election and energy, how is He still righteous? Furthermore, how can prayer change and direct the acts of an unchangeable God? In other words, if all virtues are divine gifts how is God impartial? If all spiritual life is divine energy, how am I free? If prayer is a power

how is God immutable? Mind, I deny neither of these alternatives, but affirm both. I only shew you a mystery; and that not of theology merely, but of being.

Now look at its human side. Here the life of the Spirit is manifest enough. There are saints in the world as well as hypocrites; righteous men as well as rogues; chaste men as well as libertines; generous men as well as selfish. This life meets you everywhere. Look at godly children, converted reprobates, disinterested philanthropists, devout Sunday-school teachers, heroic martyrs, holy lives, triumphant deaths. Aye, verily, Christendom is full of them, as an orchard is of trees. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Mind, I am not asserting *perfection* but *life*.

III. CONSIDER CHRIST OUR LIFE AS AN EXAMPLE. Look at the divine aspect of our Immanuel. What transcendent knowledge, words, miracles are here! Track His power downwards over evil. Craft is split open to the core. Traitors and guards fall to the earth. Diseases fly as dust before the wind of His word. Hell trembles. "We know thee who thou art," &c. "Art thou come to torment us?" &c. The foundation of all evil shook to the very roots at His touch. Now track it upwards over good. To shew Him lord of vineyards, fields, mines, and seas; loaves, fishes, wine and money, come instantly at His bidding. Moses, Elias, angels and God, wait upon His word. Thus all regions of being, downward to hell and upward to heaven, were scenes of His miraculous might. "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven and in earth, in the seas and all deep places." Furthermore, the eyes of prophetic angels and men, flooded with lustre all past ages, as they drank their light from a Messiah to come, and the hope of this sinful earth; and the holy heavens shout, clad with light, as they look back to the "Word made flesh," and forward to "the glorious appearance of the great God and our Saviour." The Bible speaks of no man as it does of Jesus. It ascribes the names, attributes, worship, and works, of God to Him. Truly in Him lie the deep things

of God. Can you sound these depths, or even the mystery of the union in Him of the human with the Divine?

Still on the human side all is plain and imitable enough. The man Christ Jesus "setting an example," &c.; eating, drinking, toiling, teaching, praying, blessing, weeping over hard hearts, binding up broken ones, tempted, betrayed, nailed up to a tree alive, washed from His blood, and laid in a tomb when dead! This is all intelligible enough. But this is not all. For while Christ thus "concerning the flesh" came, "He was over all God blessed for ever;" and the human was still to the Divine, as the wave that breaks on the sea beach is to the unfathomable ocean.

IV. CONSIDER CHRIST OUR LIFE AS A REVERSION. How much of heaven lies hidden in mystery! Still as the perfection and beatitude of our present nature, how much both physical, mental, moral, and social, lies in sunshine beneath the eye of our conception and hope!

But I have lingered too long on the manifest and the mysterious of these four aspects of life in Christ, and pass from them with this one observation. As philosophy would be ashamed of itself if it denied the divine mystery which lies beneath life as it is in nature, and called its material phase its all; so theology if it denies the divine mystery of life as it is in Jesus, and calls its human phase its all, has small title to our trust or our respect.

These then are the broad facts of all life, now let us fix on some of its distinctive features.

What shall be our first? Motion? Nay, a steam-engine has this. Power? Nay, every cloth factory trembles and rattles with this. But while you call neither of these alive, yet you do the engine *driver*, the factory *child*. Now, why?

Is not this the distinction?—

First: *All life is spontaneous*. Its action is not transmitted, but self-generated. All other motion is the result of action upon the moving body; but life is self-acting. Indeed it is the only self-acting agent in the universe.



Now look upon the spontaneous life of a Christian. He is not devout, honest, benevolent, because he is forced, but because he wills, aye and loves, to be so. "The love of Christ, constraineth us," &c., and this force of internal action, like that which broke up the earth's crust, and formed the granite rocks, bursts up through all the secular lusts of man's nature, and defies all state laws, penalties, dungeons, racks, to coerce or repress it. All hail! Jesus, thou mighty life-spirit. O Prince of Life roll away the stone; say but, "Lazarus come forth," and we will all burst our tombs to worship, love and follow thee! But what lessons this first characteristic reads us. Look (1) How *diversified* is this spontaneous life. There it is in a fish, a flower, a man;—it creeps and it flies. It loads earth with fruits, but some you must stoop and some you must climb to gather. Even so are the characteristic virtues which distinguish Christian men. Neither envy nor idolize others, then, because they differ from you, nor fester vanity nor despondency because you differ from them. Do not use your dogmatic theology, like some people do their shears, only to clip living trees, and disfigure living animals, to make them beautiful. (2) What *degrees* there are also in this life! The seed-corn, the green blade, the yellow ear; the infant, the old man, the seraph. Let not the young Christian despise the wise caution of the old, nor the old the enterprising ardor of the young. God forbid that youth should cool down to the temperature of age, or age burn with the fierce fire of youth. Both are lovely in their season. Let each, in charity cherish, honor, love, and learn from, the other. (3) How *beautiful* is all life. Death alone is repulsive and unlovely: all deformity and disease are so, only because they are incipient or partial death. The law of God is that physical life enshrine itself in beauteous forms, fragrance, colors, tones. Every benevolent emotion lights up the countenance with super-human loveliness. The most ordinary features then become beautiful as angels;—variegated lamps fit to burn before the throne of God. In like manner, all the benevolent passions seek to utter themselves in music. They alone are the soul

of all the harmony in the universe. They sweep the hearts of seraphs, and swell the voices of the blest. But the malignant passions are all ugly and harsh. Craft, treachery, rage, distort the features;—neither are they sung. Truth is outraged, music is caricatured, our sensibilities are tortured when even great masters attempt this:—they mock or shock us. O youth, if you would be beautiful and have music in your hearts, be good! Think of this. (4) All life has in it the *instinct of self-preservation*. The very flowers in your house turn to the window for light; and even the edible roots in your storehouse or cellar send out fibres yards long to seek out any crevice where they can get air and health. The ox and the sheep and all wild herds thus select their pasture. And further, salubrious aliment is sweet; and poisonous distasteful. This sensitive instinct is life's surest protection. Even so, a sacred instinct guides the pious soul in his choice of books, recreations, society, enterprises. He is "a law to himself." Herein are his safety, health and joy. "Oh how I love thy law." "How sweet are thy words unto my taste." "I am a companion of them that fear thy name." (5) *It subordinates to itself all forces*. Nature's laws are made for it. Look at the convolvulus in the hedges, the vine on the trellis, the nautilus on the sea-wave, or the lark in the sky. They are there by using the laws of nature. These neither crush nor coerce the feeblest thing, except it be folly and malice. These keep the ant and the archangel equally free. These are so pliable and plastic, that life can bend and mould them to its will. They are the very cradle of life's infancy, the hand-tools of its science, and the throne of its glory. Everywhere we see lower laws used by the higher. Physical by rational, chemical by vital, physical and chemical by moral. Now the life of Christ in us is the highest of vital forces. It subordinates all other;—lifts the living soul up through them, and on them. With outspreading wings she soars, hovers, and sings amid supernal light until she settles on the throne of God. (6) It is essentially *progressive*. When life ceases to progress it begins to decay. Its starting

point is a germ, its goal is perfection. A living tree or body soon reaches this, but a soul's growth is illimitable. Knowledge takes up no room. Every new thought is a fresh light to see by, and a fresh power to work by. "Always abounding," &c., *i. e.* always surpassing your former selves. Alas! how many have but "a name to live, and are dead." A few doctrines and ceremonies; but where is the ever-growing goodness! We often ascribe to religious life, that which springs merely from natural impulse, or professional routine. Formalists, heathens, infidels, have these. "What do ye more," &c. Our piety is like the plate glass mirror at the back of a jeweller's window; it seems to multiply what it only reflects. There is nothing *in it*. A child or an idiot may be cheated by the illusion, but not the owner. Are not we?

Secondly: *All life is assimilative.* The oak is not in the acorn. Whence then comes its giant trunk? Is it not partly from the earth, air, sunbeams, and dew, by this process of assimilation? (1) Observe *its law*. Only those elements are assimilated; and no more even of them than nourish the life. All else it rejects. Oh what a lesson for the worldly-minded! They load themselves with thick clay. (2) *Its sign*. You plant a shrub, and if it assimilate congenial elements it is alive; if not it is dead. It lives only as long as this process continues. This is the law of all life. Oh! what a lesson to professors. (3) *Its bond*. All this assimilated substance is held together by the vitality which incorporated it. The only binding force of all bodies ecclesiastical as well as material is life. Without this they crumble and fall to pieces; or if they are held together it is like half dead trees bound by iron hoops. What a lesson for Churches! (4) *Its purpose*. This is maturity. Look at that plantation of firs; see how erect and elegant they rise, holding a canopy of green as a carpet for the sunshine above, and a cool shade for you below. Had these fir-trees never any undergrowth? or, has the woodman's axe lopped off their lower branches, and shaped their shafts so tall and graceful? No, no. The under branches died off of

themselves, as each tree sought the fresh air and the bright sky. So ever lift up your soul heavenward, and your lower earthly tendencies will all wither and die off of their own accord. You will need no hacking and hewing, no mortification and penance. What a lesson for the ascetic! (5) Its *materials*. How ample! Sun, shower, earth, air; all abound with these. So for spiritual life:—heaven, earth, hell, all varieties of human character, condition, and vicissitude.

Thirdly: *All life is reproductive*. Pull up a weed, and if you do not kill it, it will live till it has shed its seed, and then die of itself. No grain will perish in the furrow till it has spurted forth its germ; and this it nourishes with its own decaying substance. Here is another law of life. Now (1) This law is *insatiable*. All life is impatient to produce its kind. So the Christian. (2) On this depends life's *perpetuation*. So of the divine life on earth. (3) This is life's *glory*. I ask not that my biography be emblazoned by the orator, or sung by the poet, nor my epitaph engraven in marble or brass; but that my life be perpetuated in living souls. Let my memory live in them.

One parting word. (1) Of encouragement. "When Christ who is our life shall appear," &c. A good man does not die at death. "I am the resurrection," &c. The only thing certain *here* is that we must die. The only thing certain *there* is that we cannot. This is the glory both of Christ and the Christian. (2) Of admonition. He comes to destroy death. The autumn blast sweeps through the trees breaking down the dead wood; this is picked up for the fire. So Christ's coming. "He will send forth his angels to gather out of his kingdom all things that offend," &c. "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

W. WHEELER.

*Stroud.*

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SUBJECT:—*The Cloak and the Parchments; or,  
Man's Needs.*

“The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.—2 Tim. iv. 13.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Eighty-sixth.

THERE are many subjects in this somewhat singular passage; each of which would afford abundant matter for a discourse.

We have a *striking illustration of the manner of divine inspiration*. Here you have an apostle writing an inspired epistle; an epistle containing divine instructions, admonitions and predictions; and in it he brings forward comparatively little things about himself. He deals not only with personalities but apparently trivialities:—his dress and his books are matters of reference and direction. This is not the only place in which Paul does this; and Paul is not the only writer who does it. It is the mark and method of revelation. Whatever we may think of it, however we may explain it, so it is. The divinest communications of truth appear in connexion with things of personal and secular concern. Just as in nature, you have the sublimest scenes dotted here and there with unimportant objects, the most majestic displays of creative power along with trifling traces of human residence and work, so is it in revelation. This shows that man is in it, not as organ only, but as agent. And it shows also that it is for man. Human interest and sympathy are awakened by human circumstances, feelings, &c. Doubtless the Bible might have been given otherwise; and if *we* had chosen the form, perhaps it would have been. But it is better as it is:—not less divine in being more human.

We have a *beautiful display of spiritual self-possession*. “I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.” Here is a man, a prisoner, looking forward to certain and speedy death, and that death a martyrdom; and yet he calmly talks of things of this world, things of physical concern, things of self-improvement, and gives



directions about them. He is not engrossed with his circumstances and his fate; loses not his interest in the world, and his lower self. Such self-possession may be, and often is, displayed by men who have no religion. In Paul it arose from religion. In them, it is the fruit of insensibility or ignorance; in him it was the fruit of wise and tender courage. And it may well spring from this. Nothing else has any right to be so calm and composed. Death is not a presence for levity and bluster. There is no true valor in making light of it. When a man can look at the past as Paul did, (v. 7) as a fight finished, a mission accomplished, a trust discharged; and when he can look at the future as Paul did, (v. 8) as a righteous, and divine, and most solemn glory, he can afford to "possess his soul in patience."

We have an *affecting utterance of human needs*. One possessing naturally great endowments, and who had attained great excellence and honor, gives expression to certain wants. With all his present principles, past achievements, and future destiny, he has yet necessities as well as resources. Though a saint, he speaks of a garment; though a martyr, he craves a companion; though an apostle, he desires his books. Spirituality did not destroy his physical sensibilities; heroic courage and independence did not deaden his social affections; supernatural illumination did not make him depreciate the ordinary means of information and excitement.

This is our subject. To see such an one as Paul, so circumstanced, in want of such things; such a man, such a saint, such an apostle, speaking as he does in the text, have we not an impressive exhibition of *human needs*? There are three classes of these wants before us:—

I. THE PHYSICAL. "The cloak." Paul needed a garment, and wished for one. What a complex being is man:—what a mystery of flesh and spirit! Here is one of noble powers and aspirations which mocked earth and time;—one whose soul was the scene of majestic wonders and a source of

well-nigh miraculous influences; one who could meet opposing wills and sceptical minds right royally; one who could ascend to Paradise and revel in the glory to be revealed; and one who was living calmly in the presence of death, and a terrible death; concerning himself with a covering for his poor material frame.

Nor do we blame or disesteem him for so doing. We all do the same, and must do it. To slight the body is a mark of heretics; to destroy it is to be a murderer. What a world of need is caused by its possession! What urgent demands does it make on care and effort, skill and labor! What a sphere of industry in providing for it, what a stimulus, what a reward! How the resources of nature are employed, the appliances of science, the genius of art! What a multitude of trades and professions exist on its sole or chief account! What multitudes find their whole occupation in feeding, clothing, beautifying, healing it! How well is he esteemed who discovers some new aliment, some new gratification, some new adornment for it!

But here, the thought is, that the body is a source of trouble, inconvenience, dependence;—that small things may lead to its discomfort and injury. This material fabric may be made to suffer from a thousand incidents. Any day or hour it may become the seat and instrument of acutest pain. Let but the ordinary laws of nature be broken; let but the ordinary operations of life be suspended; let there be but a little accident, a slight mistake, a temporary forgetfulness; and how bitterly are we made to feel the pressure and responsibility of our material charge! We cannot afford to trifle with or ignore it. If we should, but for a season, we shall be rebuked. From our loftiest expatiations we shall be brought down. The most spiritual and independent must remember the mislaid or forgotten dress.

II. THE SOCIAL. "When thou comest." "Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me." (v. 9). The reason assigned was that Paul was now almost left alone. "Only Luke is with

me." For some reason or other, all else had departed, or were of but little use. "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me." (v. 16). In these circumstances he needed the presence and fellowship of Timothy, his "dearly beloved son" in the faith. Paul could bear opposition, could endure coldness, for Christ; and yet he felt keenly, yearned for society. He could sacrifice it when called to do so, but it was a sacrifice. He gave up what he deeply appreciated. It was not the resignation of an unvalued blessing, but of one dearly prized.

Man is a social being. He is made to feel for, and with, his fellow-man. Sociality is a joy, a strength, a light to him. He is revealed, regaled, renewed by fellowship. When there is community of views, sympathy of feelings, it causes a wonderful development of his nature, and gives it wonderful power. It is a lamp, a feast, a buttress, of his being. It is everything whereby he can be ministered unto, or help to minister. God is social: "The God of the spirits of all flesh." Christ is social: "The head of the body, the Church." Christianity is social: "The fellowship of the Gospel." Man is social: "Come shortly unto me."

See in Paul the craving for faithful and sympathetic companionship. How his heart groans for intercourse with a like mind and spirit! He could bear the shame and troubles of imprisonment without a murmur, he could stand unappalled in the near prospect of a cruel death, and yet he clings to Timothy, and urges his speedy visitation. Here we have a department of human need, and great need. What poor creatures would be the strongest and the bravest without fellowship! "One man is no man." True, there are some cold, misanthropic souls that shun their fellows, like some plants that shrink and shrivel at a touch, and that even take an awful pride in solitude and isolation; but this is disease, or sin, or both. The finest natures are furthest removed from it. Fellowship in woe, in joy, in work, in thought, is a rich delight, and in most cases a great necessity.

III. THE SPIRITUAL. "The books, especially the parchments." We know not what these were, but we are sure that they were books that tended to the cultivation of mind and heart. They were neither filthy nor frothy.

What a field of thought is opened up by these words! See the ministry of minds; see their workings and results preserved and propagated by the use of letters; see the labors and rewards of some made the inheritance of others; and all this beyond the sphere of personal presence and immediate influence. See it done for men and ages unborn. "By it he being dead yet speaketh;"—and if Abel by his faith, others by their writings:—yea, his faith could do it only as it was written. What a puny thing would the greatest man be, if he could profit only by his own thoughts, or if he could avail himself of the thoughts of others only by word of mouth! Books are the levers of ages; the power that invests their successive treasures at compound interest; that preserves their seed for ever-increasing harvests. It is chiefly through books that each race of man has not to begin again like animals.

What a debt we owe to books! What information and stimulus! what means of growth, what instruments of knowledge, joy and power! Let anyone endeavor (it will be but an endeavor) to estimate what he has derived from them, and he will be amazed at his indebtedness,—and especially with regard to sacred books. We do not suppose that Paul would leave his Bible behind him: but he might leave books bearing on religion. How great our debt to such!

"Especially the parchments." Some think these were a kind of common-place books, in which the apostle put his own reflections, and precious passages met with in his reading. If so, we have an important thought. That is most a man's own which he has originated, or thoroughly appropriated by meditation. Books are nothing but as they are "read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested." No wonder that Paul "especially" wished for "the parchments."

We conclude with some reflections.

First: *The subject teaches humility.* Apt are we to "think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think." Independence! Why, every boasted power and excellence serve but to show the folly of the pretence; are but a memento of our dependence. "What hast thou which thou hast not received?" Physical man, social man, spiritual man, "Why boast as though thou hadst not received it?"

Secondly: *It teaches gratitude.* The goodness of God is in providing for our wants. Our need might be only misery, and would be but for divine arrangements. And how grateful should we be for the best of all provisions! the Book of books, the fellowship of the Gospel, the redemption of our entire nature by Jesus Christ!

Thirdly: *It teaches benevolence.* He who feels bound to do nothing for others ignores and denies the teaching of every part of his being, every sense and sentiment of his nature, every element of his lot. We have only to think upon our need, to see how utterly helpless we should be without the ministry of others; and thus we have a lesson of brotherhood, a claim of love.

Fourthly: *It teaches true self-interest.* These are our wants now. They will be ours for ever. Are we providing for their eternal supply?

A. J. MORRIS.

*Holloway.*

SUBJECT:—*Divine Goodness in Human History.*

"Every good and perfect gift."—James i. 16, 17.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Eighty-seventh.

The text illustrates two thoughts:—

I. ALL THE GOODNESS IN HUMAN HISTORY COMES FROM GOD. The source whence human good springs is "the father of lights." This is as true of the goodness which



comes through the medium of natural laws as of that which comes directly. There are laws fixed in the very constitution of things. Temperance the law of health, industry the law of competence, truth and thought the law of intellectual progress, prayer the law of spiritual blessings. It is not unsatisfactory to say that law is the "source of good."

(1) All laws must have a fountain, and imply the existence and influence of some sovereign who watches their operation, and infallibly guides them to their appropriate results. These natural laws may be mediums through which good comes down to us, but they are not its source;—that is, they do not originate it. (2) I trace it in the good which comes down to me appropriately and suitably. It comes when I need it, and is just the thing I need. Here is then evidence of a mind thinking of and for me. To tell me that I am placed under a system of law, will not explain the facts of my life. They can only be understood on the admission of an originating and adapting mind. In harmony with this are the thoughts of the Bible. The Psalmist looses all thought of that grand system of instrumentality which often obscures the Divine source, in the grasp which his faith takes of God as the giver of good. "He openeth his hand," &c. So the apostle, "Who giveth us," &c. Hosea ii. 21, 22.

The sun is the originator of light,—its primal fount. So God is the primal fount of all good. It is a creation of His power, and an efflux of His goodness. This principal applies in a specially direct manner to the spiritual forms of human good. Divine influences on the soul come directly from God. Strength, consolation, hope, holiness, are the results of the soul's fellowship with God. Christian virtues are fruits of the Divine Spirit, coming down and operating on the individual character. These come through no human medium, are conferred by no human hand. They are found in personal fellowship of soul with God. Priestism which professes to confer the spiritual forms of good, is a delusion and lie. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual

blessings," &c. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth," &c.

This course is unchangeable. "With whom is no variableness." (1) The introduction of this idea in relation to general truth seems to be accidental rather than otherwise. The analogy as above. In this part he refers to contrast. The idea itself is the unchangeableness of God, contrasting with the sun's variableness. Advert to the sun's changes. The phrases, "variableness," "shadow," &c. Then the Divine unchangeableness. "Not a man that he should lie," &c. "They shall perish," &c. (2) This grand truth is full of suggestiveness and consolation. What would be the effects if, as we were expending our present good, there were grounds for the thought that the resources of good may fail, or the stream of good on which we depended may be interrupted? What would be the effects on the universe? What misery and desolation! Thank God it cannot be. God cannot change. His absolute and infinite perfections forbid it. This great sun, whose rays are ever streaming on the universe, inspiring life and gladness, is "without variableness or shadow," &c. In sight of this I can understand Christ. "Take no thought," &c.

II. THE DIVINE GOODNESS IN HUMAN HISTORY COMES IN SEPARATE GIFTS AND DIFFERS IN DEGREE. "Every good gift," &c.

First: *It comes in separate gifts.* Divine gifts come as man's demands arise. 1 Kings xiii. 10. A miracle ever developes some grand and fundamental idea. How evenly Divine supplies and human need are balanced! The good of a stock can duly be realized in separate draughts. What a grand comprehension, incalculable enumeration, endless history, is our life of Divine gifts. Each man's life is a grand multiplication of units of God-sent gifts.

Secondly: *It comes in different forms.* "Good and perfect," &c. The variety of its forms. *Physical*; food, health, money, seasons of innocent sensation. *Intellectual*; power

to think, genius, (inventive, poetic, artistic), truth. *Spiritual*; pardon, regenerating influences, strength, holiness, &c. These forms differ in their intrinsic worth. "Good;"—physical and intellectual: "perfect;" spiritual. This is the leading sentiment of the following passages. "Man does not live by bread," &c. Truth is better than bread. "Thou shalt worship," &c.—Proper dispositions are higher than possessions. "What shall it profit?" &c.—There is a form of good higher than worldly. "Unfaithful in the least," &c.

This subject serves several important purposes:—

First: *Sheds new light on the good of human life, and reveals its sacredness.* It is not self-produced; it is something which has come down. Apply this in all your contemplations; temporal felicities, gold and silver, innocent pleasures, spiritual thoughts, pure dispositions: as you mark them say in reference to each and all, they "come down." "What has thou, that thou hast not received?" &c. There is everything in this idea to render these things sacred in our estimation. We prize the gold and gems which have come from distant islands. We consider the gift of a far-off father, or the present of a superior, sacred. These then should certainly be prized. Whence do they come? From the far-off spirit-land, from our heavenly Father, the highest of all beings. Oh! the sacredness of life's gifts! Talk not of consecrated things: everything has come down to us consecrated by our heavenly Father's blessing.

This subject:—

Secondly: *Fixed as a habit is favorable to the culture of religious sentiment.* This thought would check the tendencies which worldly good induces. If unchecked, it leads to worldliness, hardness, ruin. The rich man had "good things," but never realized "perfect" gifts. "Lest I be full and deny thee." If this thought were felt, these tendencies would be checked. Foster the growth of spiritual virtues.—Humility: "I am not worthy."—Gratitude: What shall I render?"—Devotedness: I "beseech you by the mercies," &c.

This subject:—

Thirdly: *Reveals the stewardship of humanity.* In this God must have a purpose worthy of such an expenditure of wisdom and love. Can we suppose that God in all this has no purpose, or some inadequate one? He can have no purpose less than this, the use of all for His own glory. This idea of stewardship Jesus revealed in two parables.—The Talents, and Unjust Steward. Everything you possess you have in charge; you may not expend it as you please.

This subject:—

Fourthly: *Discloses the wickedness of a selfish life.* Some expend all this good on themselves; appropriate all; give out none. What a prostitution of God's sacred gifts! What robbery! "Ye have robbed me." Oh! what wickedness is there in the life of that man who subordinates everything to himself! Who makes God his slave, instead of enthroning him as his sovereign; who makes God's gifts the victims of his selfish heart, instead of things committed to him in trust for Divine glory!

R. A. D.

SUBJECT:—*An Ever-growing Argument for Evangelism.*

"Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."—Daniel xii. 4.

Analysis of *Domily the Two Hundred and Eighty-eight.*

OUR age realizes the scene here predicted. This generation is pre-eminently migratory; men are everywhere on the move; a restless impulse has seized the world; and the fixed habits which bound our ancestors to their hearth are giving way. Once British families were like trees rooted in the soil; from age to age they lived in the same district; but now, they are like expeditional barques heaving about in search of new

scenes and new homes. Our countrymen are now found in every part of the world, and are mingling with all the varied tribes of mankind. By the invention of steam, and the improvements of navigation, distance is almost annihilated. Thoroughfares are opened up through every part of the globe, and distant nations are brought into close and frequent intercourse. Men are here in the morning and six hundred miles distant at night ; here this week, and treading the continent of America next. Different principles stimulate men in this incessant migration. The emigrant moves for bread, the merchant for wealth, the hero for conquest, the traveller for pleasure, the philosopher for truth, the Christian for souls.

Now the intellectual result of all these intermigrations is *knowledge* ! “Knowledge,” says the prophet, “shall be increased.” There are other creatures which migrate as well as man. “The crane and the swallow” migrate, yet they get no knowledge : their bodies are active but their souls are stationary. Their journeying during sixty centuries has not yielded them one new idea. In their mental world there is no accession of light. Not so with men. Knowledge increases as they journey to distances and mingle with foreigners. Their knowledge of the physical world increases ; of its geological formations, political divisions, its productions, extent, climates, and tenantry. Their knowledge of man increases ; of his antiquity, identity, and spiritual condition. What a wonderful increase in knowledge has taken place in modern times ! Indeed, the great discoverers of science have only just departed from our midst. Bacon who freed the mind from scholastic bondage ; Newton who gave us a true theory of the universe ; Harvey who discovered the circulation of blood ; Locke who explored the world of mind ; Watt who gave us a steam-engine ; these great men that have given the modern world such an impulse to knowledge are scarcely cold in their graves. The tide of human knowledge is set in, it is flowing, and destined to flow higher and higher. Mind is roused from the slumber of ages, the floodgates



of thought are broken up and knowledge must go on increasing.

Now I shall use this necessary *augmentation of knowledge, as an argument for the necessity of propagating the Gospel.*

I. THE MORE SECULAR KNOWLEDGE THE WORLD HAS, THE MORE NEED IT HAS OF THE GOSPEL. Some deny this, others doubt it, and but few, perhaps, believe it. The following thoughts, however, would make it evident.

First: *That mere knowledge effects no radical change in the great principles of human character.* The sources of all action are in the heart. Our likes and dislikes are our controlling impulses. Philosophy, consciousness, and the Bible show, that "out of the heart are the issues of life." Now does secular knowledge change the heart? Does it make a dishonest man honest, a selfish man generous, and a sensual man spiritual? Let the history of intelligent nations answer. Greece was philosophic, but what was its moral character? Consult Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians. Rome was philosophic, but what was its moral condition? Read the first chapter to the Romans. Why, Socrates himself was accused of sensuality. Plato's republic was constructed on the principle of a community of wives; Cicero contended for fornication; Zeno considered unnatural sins as indifferent. China and India are learned in their way, but where are their virtues? I grant indeed, that knowledge may induce and qualify a man to act out the evil principles of his heart in a more refined and less offensive manner. The intelligent man instead of committing some petty deed of larceny will rob on a large scale, and under the protection of the law will form and execute schemes of legal fraud. It is fashionable now for statesmen, orators, and journalists to trace crimes to ignorance, and to represent education as the effective purifier of public morals. My impression is that you may multiply schools on every hand, fill the nation with secular knowledge, and still the springs of morals may remain as polluted as ever. Some of the most illustrious

chiefs in English literature figure as the most despicable characters in English morals. Bacon, Dryden, Churchill, Burns, Pope, and many other literary peers were certainly not eminent for virtue. Nothing but the Gospel can act upon the heart.

Secondly : *The more knowledge, the greater will be the power for evil.* "Knowledge is power." A few intelligent men in a village or a town will exert far greater influence than hundreds of the ignorant. As the world grows in knowledge it grows in power to trample upon the laws of God, to poison the fountains of influence, and to rebel against the interest of the universe. The power of the devil is the power of knowledge.

Thirdly : *The more knowledge, the larger the amount of responsibility.* Christ taught this. "He that knoweth his master's will," &c. Here then is my argument. If secular knowledge is destined to increase, if this knowledge has not the power to change the heart, whilst it increases man's power to do evil and enhances his responsibility, then, ought not our earnestness in the propagation of the Gospel to rise with the increase of general intelligence?

II. THE MORE KNOWLEDGE THE WORLD HAS THE MORE LIKELY IT IS TO RECEIVE THE GOSPEL. It seems to me a common impression that a state of rude savage heathenism is more favorable to the reception of the Gospel, than a state of enlightened civilization. We think that this impression is contrary to fact and injurious in influence. We would rejoice indeed in the fact that the Gospel is suited to man in the lowest stage of development ; that no spirit is so sensualized, so deeply sunk, that the Gospel cannot reach it. But we contend, that the more intelligent a man is, the more favorable his condition for Gospel influence.

First : *The more intelligent a man is, the more evidence he will have to convince him of the truth of the Gospel.* The more information a man gets either from testimony, observation, or research, concerning the facts, scenes, and customs referred to

in the Bible, the more evidence he will have to convince him of its truth. If the function of evidence is to convince, the intelligent man is in a far better condition than the ignorant.

Secondly: *The more intelligent the man is, the more illustrations he will have of the power of the Gospel.* What illustrations of the power of the Gospel has an intelligent man which are hid entirely from the ignorant! He can trace its conquests on the page of history from the day of Pentecost to this hour. From the little room of Jerusalem, spreading over the east, flowing to the west, and sending back its streams eastward again, he can follow it.

Thirdly: *The more intelligent a man is, the more indications he will see for the necessity of the Gospel.* The more a man understands his own nature, the more he will be prepared to feel that laws, education, and science, are not sufficient to meet the spiritual wants of his nature and condition.

Fourthly: *The more intelligent a man is, the more fitted he will be to appreciate the discoveries of the Gospel.* The more knowledge he has the better will he be able to appreciate the wisdom of the scheme, the righteousness of the claims, and the adaptation of the provisions, of the Gospel. (1) The character of the Gospel encourages this impression. What a sublime system is Christianity! It has aspects of grandeur, relations and bearings, which an ignorant man is incompetent to discover. (2) The effects of missionary labor encourage the impression. Where does the missionary succeed most?—amongst the barbarous or the civilized classes? Compare the Reports of our Home Missions with those of Foreign. (3) The example of the first ministers of Christianity. Where did the apostles go to preach? Did they search out the darkest parts of the world? Did they go amongst barbarous and savage hordes? No, they selected the most enlightened and influential parts of the world for their spheres of labor. To Philippi, and Ephesus, and Antioch, and Corinth; to Egypt, the fountain of learning; to Athens, the seat of science, “the eye of Greece;” to Rome, the enlightened empress of the world;

they went! These men knew that the more enlightened the population were, the more likely they would be to appreciate the message;—and the more qualified afterwards to propagate it.

From this subject we learn :—

(1) The glory of the Gospel. Let the intellect of the world advance! it can never outgrow the Gospel: the Gospel will never become obsolete. As the sunny vault above us widens to the advanced step of the traveller scaling the hills, so the Gospel expands to the intellectual progress of the ages. (2) Our encouragement to diffuse it. Were I assured that the Gospel would succeed better among the ignorant than the learned; and that as men advanced in intelligence, the farther they passed from the reach of the Gospel, I should lose hope in the final triumph of Christianity: for knowledge, secular knowledge, is destined to advance. The tide of human intelligence must rise. But such is not the fact. More knowledge the better. Let knowledge increase; let schools multiply; let the streams of literature deepen and widen; let men run to and fro; let nations mingle together; let the thoughts of men, the world over, flow and re-flow, and the sea of knowledge cover the world. Both the world's *need* of the Gospel and its *capacity* for receiving it are heightened by all this.

#### SUBJECT :—*The Ages.*

“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”—1 Cor. x. 11.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Eighty-ninth.

THE expression, “all these things,” refers to the things spoken of in the preceding verses of the chapter, and they are things connected with the history of the Jewish people in the wilderness. The apostle gives a brief sketch of their history.

He records the special blessings with which they were endowed, the crimes which they committed, and the dangers to which they were consequently exposed. From the text, viewed in connexion with the preceding verses, we infer, The moral relationship of the ages ; The Divine superintendence of the ages ; and, The growing responsibility of the ages.

I. THE MORAL RELATIONSHIP OF THE AGES. "These things," in Jewish history, "happened unto them for ensamples," or types. The words suggest :—

First : *That the Jewish history in the wilderness is a mirror of Christian life.* (1) In the blessings it records. The Jews in the wilderness had (first) a special guidance. "They were under the cloud." (v. 1) The cloud means the shechinah, the symbol of the Divine presence. This went before them by day as a cloud to screen them from the rays of the sun, and as a pillar of fire by night. So long as they followed this, they were safe. This cloud is an "ensample" of the Bible. They (secondly) were specially *initiated*. The word "baptism" has two distinct meanings ; one in the application of water as a religious rite, the other an act of dedication. The latter of course is the sense we are to attach to it here ; for the Jews were not baptized in the sea : as they passed through it, the "waters were a wall unto them on the right hand and on the left." "They went through the midst of the sea on dry ground." All that it means is, that by passing through it they were initiated in an especial sense to the leadership of Moses ;—to the guidance of God. There was no going back to Egypt after this. This is an "ensample" of the consecration of Christians. They had (thirdly) special supplies. "They did all eat the same spiritual meat," that is, the manna, which God rained from heaven. "They did all drink the same spiritual drink." That drink was the water which gushed from the rock called "spiritual" because it was supernatural. That manna and that water are "ensamples" of the blessings which Christians derive from Christ.



Indeed that water was a striking emblem of the blessings of Christianity. It was sufficient for all—two millions. It followed them through all their journey, &c. (2) In the imperfections it records. These Jews, favored with so many blessings, displayed great defects of character. They were lustful, idolatrous, frivolous, discontented. These imperfections, alas! are too often seen in the Christian Church. (3) In the perils which it records. They displeased God, they were overthrown in the wilderness, and no less than 120,000 fell in one day. Christians are exposed to the same peril—in danger of offending God. In Jewish history, therefore, you have a history which reflects much on yourself.

Secondly : *That Jewish history in the wilderness is a monitor of Christian life.* “They were written for our admonition.” The principles, therefore, embodied in that history are of universal application. They are (1) the special care which God exercises over those who commit themselves to Him ; (2) the tendency of the depraved heart to go wrong ; and (3) the indissoluble connexion between sin and suffering. These principles should be studied. They “are written for our admonition.” You may find them in every chapter of Providence.

II. THE DIVINE SUPERINTENDENCE OF THE AGES. The words suggest :—

First : *That God is in the history of all ages.* Human history contains no chapter of accidents ; has no age, no year, no moment, no event, dissociated from God. He is in all. He originates the good, He permits and controls the evil. “He makes the wrath of man to praise Him.” He makes despots and devils do His pleasure.

Secondly : *That God employs one age to benefit another.* Whatsoever God does, He does for ever. Nothing takes place for its own sake. The events that transpired in Arabia, during forty short years, some thousands of years ago, were to tell on the boundless future. We are very incompetent

to judge of His plan. We are here for a few brief years under a system of things that has grown out of centuries, and of millenniums that have gone by, and that will run into an interminable future. We can neither see the beginning nor the end. "God is great and we know him not, neither can the number of his years be searched out." This connexion of God with the history of all ages, should have two effects on our minds : (1) Should restrain us from hasty judgments on His providence. The very things which we consider evils may in the long run prove the greatest blessings. The bitterest ingredients in the cup of life may prove to have the greatest curative virtue. When the whole history of our race is complete, it may appear that all the evils of our world as compared with the good, are but as one jarring note in an endless anthem of joy, one cloudy hour in the sunshine of ages. (2) Should impress us with the seriousness of life. All things are full of God. All things are flowing to the Eternal. Christ taught that all the events of His providence are His advents. "Be ye therefore ready," &c.

III. THE GROWING RESPONSIBILITY OF THE AGES. "Upon whom the ends of the world are come." The expression, "ends of the world," means last times, and is used to designate the Gospel dispensation. This dispensation is the last under which men will live on the earth. There is nothing to succeed it. The patriarchal economy was succeeded by the Jewish, the Jewish by the Gospel ; but there is nothing to succeed the Gospel. We live in these last times. In this age we have the advantages of the experiences and discoveries of past ages, in two ways. (1) Through literature. History gives us all the intellectual wealth of the ancient heathen. We hear Homer sing, Demosthenes declaim, Socrates reason ; we mark the battles of ancient Greece and Rome. History gives to us the intellect and the wealth of the chosen people. We commune with Moses and David ; we listen to the Proverbs of Solomon and the lofty

utterances of Isaiah. We can call the Apostles into our presence, and accompany even the Son of God in His journies of mercy. The intellectual wealth of modern Europe is ours too. The great teachers, poets, and preachers of past ages have sent down their thoughts to us. Never was there an age so privileged. The intellectual wealth and experience of all past ages meet in this. Consequently our responsibility is great. If Christ said, it shall be "more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for Chorazin and Capernaum," He can say, it would be more tolerable for Chorazin and Capernaum than for modern Europe. Our Christianity ought to be of a far higher type than that of the apostolic age. (2) Through influence. The mental influence streaming down regularly from sire to us.

The subject reminds us :—

First : *Of the special goodness of God to this age.* "The lines are fallen to us in pleasant places ; yea we have a goodly heritage." The pious Jews once desired to see what we see ; but they did not. The Jews lived under moonlight,—cold, &c. The first Christian, under the clear dawn of morning ; but it is high noon with us.

Secondly : *The necessity for a superior type of excellence.* Do you admire the greatest early saints ? You ought to be higher—higher even than that noble army of martyrs and confessors whose names are the glory of human history ; —for your advantages are greater. But, alas, I fear the ages which have raised us in the arts and sciences have not brought us corresponding spiritual good. We have not turned the spiritual treasures which the ages have bequeathed to us to a right account.

SUBJECT :—*Spring.*

“The winter is past, the rain is over and gone ; the flowers appear on the earth ; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.”—Solomon’s Song ii. 11, 12.

## Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Ninetieth.

THERE is, perhaps, no season of the year which is looked forward to with more pleasure than the season of spring ; and no period of the year which is more instructive and suggestive.

The moral advantages, however, which are to be derived from the study of the seasons, will very much depend on the way in which they are studied ; just as the benefits which are acquired from the study of the Bible, in a great measure, depend on the spirit in which it is considered.

“Speak to the earth and it shall teach thee,” is the advice of Job to his friends, when censuring their arrogant pretensions to superior knowledge. And it is elsewhere declared that “day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.” To understand the speech of day, and acquire the knowledge which the night discloses, and study the truths which Spring, and Summer, and Autumn, and Winter illustrate, are a privilege given to men, to help in his education for the great future. As there are, however, various ways in which this privilege is used, it may be useful to point these out, that the most instructive method in which to study nature may be clearly perceived.

One class of men look upon this earth as a great *market-place*, in which to buy and sell ; or, as a storehouse of metals and food. Mountains are considered by them as useful for growing timber ; valleys for the quality of soil ; meadows as pasture ground for rearing cattle ; and districts of country for their coal, or iron, or copper. Men are regarded as a race of shepherds, and traders, and barterers. The seasons of the year are valuable, as they produce good crops of corn. Those who view nature in this light, in general

estimate men not by their moral or intellectual worth, but by their position in society or their possessions. Nature is studied by another class of men in its *scientific* aspect. The diversified phenomena of the year, and the various objects of the world which excite wonder and awe, are examined ; their laws sought to be determined, and their uses to be discovered. The air we breathe, the food we eat, and the water we drink, are all analysed. The arrangements and laws of the animal, the vegetable, and the mineral kingdoms are made known, and their bearings on the prosperity of nations unfolded. The labors of the astronomer, the geologist, and the botanist, in their respective departments, have not only increased our knowledge, but shown to us the wonderful provision which has been made for man in his temporary home on earth, for supplying his passing wants, and in disciplining his mind. Nature, studied only in its scientific aspect, may enrich the intellect of man and confer advantages on nations, and honor on its students ; but when its moral use is unheeded, and the Great First Cause overlooked, the most important advantages derivable from its study are wholly lost. The Venerable Humboldt, author of "Cosmos," may be cited as a type of the pantheistic class of scientific men ; and Hugh Miller, the author of "The Testimony of the Rocks," as a representative of those students of nature, who have united the foundation of science and religion into one great fabric radiant with the glory of God.

Another section of men study nature in what may be termed its *æsthetic* aspect. They are represented by poets and painters. Art is but a copy of nature, and is the result of the endeavor of man to convey to the mind a representation of it, either by the pen or pencil. We can neither dispense with poetry nor painting. As long as man exists there will be both poets and artists. The poet gives expression in his verse to the emotions excited in his heart, when in the presence of the forms of nature : and the painter presents to the eye, on his canvass, the dimpled pool, the green of the spreading elm tree, the fading autumn groves,



or the winter snow-storm. The creation of beauty, either by the poet or painter, is art. Their mission is therefore intended to open our eyes to behold the pictures of beauty which the sun is ever painting on the landscapes of the season, and to interpret the feelings of our hearts, that we may be gladdened and instructed. The creed of the poet and the painter, however, is too often that beauty is truth and truth is beauty ; and when this is the case, they fail to catch the divine meaning, if we may so speak, of the various appearances of the outward world.

Nature is regarded, in a pantheistic aspect, by another class of men. Nature is God and God is Nature in this case. This doctrine, when draped in the gorgeous forms of poetry and eloquence, has a seductive influence on emotional and imaginative minds. Men of science, poets and artists, have given expression to their feelings when in the presence of nature, and they have experienced, as they tell us, emotions which an angel might share ; and have been enabled to cast off the conventional forms of society, and to forget their own being in the contemplation of the beautiful, picturesque, and sublime forms of the visible world. They find all nature instinct with life. They hear the voice of God in the soft breeze of Spring, as well as in the wail of the tempest ; in the awful silence of the Summer woods and the lone beauty of the snow-robed Winter. On land and sea, mountain and moor, and beneath the silent night, they have felt the presence of God. Nature, however, when interrogated regarding the purpose of life, the moral duties which man owes to himself and to society, the mysteries of the present economy—like the ancient oracles, or the gods of Baal, gives no response. This worship of nature, which is so prevalent at present, may excite in the heart emotions of joy and refine the taste, but it can have little influence on the heart in removing sin—nor can it give any consolation to reflective minds, anxious to know about the destiny of life.

The various aspects in which nature is studied by different classes of men, enable us to see that the Christian point of

observation is the position which ought to be taken. It is not only the most instructive, but it is likewise the most comprehensive ; because it considers the useful, the scientific, the æsthetic, as well as the religious purposes of the universe. Contemplated from the Christian point of view, every object in nature has not only a temporary, but an æsthetic, scientific, and religious use. A corn field, for example, not only supplies food for man, but is beautiful to look on, and is also an evidence of the reward which follows industrious toil. An oak tree not only adds to the beauty of the landscape, but is an emblem of strength, and is adapted for various purposes in the world when cut down. The flowers which bloom on the green meadow are not only delicate emblems of the affections, but types of the shortness of human life. As God is the author of the Bible as well as the Creator of the Universe, there is a close connexion between natural and revealed religion ; and as the purpose of the Old Testament cannot be understood apart from the truths of the New, so neither can man comprehend the design of nature without revelation. This is the guide by which man is to be directed in the study of the works of God. The Bible is the moral sun of our earth, and as its light opens our eyes, the grand purposes of God in the economy of nature become more transparent, and every object becomes more attractive and instructive. So that (to use the words of Emerson) "In those celestial days when heaven and earth meet and adorn each other, it seems a poverty that we can only spend them once : we wish for a thousand heads, a thousand bodies, that we might celebrate its immense beauty in many ways and places."

The relation in which man stands to nature is close and intimate ; but unless he knows and feels that it is intended, not merely for a temporary purpose, but as a means of Christian discipline ;—to quicken his intellect, to render his emotions of pleasure more permanent, heighten his reverence for the Creator of all things, and thereby deepen and refine his devotional feelings,—the season of the year will come and

go without exciting any interest in his mind, and he will thereby lose both pleasure and instruction. It is exceedingly pleasant to let the mind expatiate on the dawning beauty of the earth, with its moral analogies, and it may not come amiss to any of us if we try to point out a few of the truths which it appears to us to open up or more certainly confirm.

The most obvious analogy which the Spring suggests is :—

I. THE RESURRECTION OF MANY FORMS AND KINDS OF LIFE, WHICH FOR A PERIOD OF TIME WERE DEAD. A few weeks before, the life of nature, to all appearance, was dead. The landscape had a lifeless aspect. The trees of the wood were leafless, the hedges by the wayside were cold and dismal, the green of the pasture ground had a sickly look, the air was bleak, and the sky was blurred with melancholy clouds. Nature was under the sway of Winter. Life was under the dominion of death. A more hopeless and desolate scene than that which nature presents, in the Winter time of the year, it would be difficult to imagine. And had it never been our lot to have seen Spring emerging from Winter, it would have been impossible to have conceived by what means beauty would have arisen out of desolation, and life been emancipated from the fetters of death. Gradually, however, Spring arose out of Winter ; and from this appearance of nature has been derived a probability of the resurrection of the human body. There are, no doubt, some points of resemblance between the resurrection of nature and the resurrection of the body of man ; but the analogy has little force as an argument. The certainty of that doctrine is only derivable from the Bible : but the resurrections of so many kinds and forms of life in the Spring, are most beautiful and striking illustrations. The apostle Paul borrows an illustration of this from the seed which is cast into the earth :—“ But some man will say, How are the dead raised up ? and with what body do they come ? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die : and that which thou

sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be ; but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain : but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.”—1 Cor. xv., 35—38.

First : *Spring presents us with a marvellous example of the sufficiency of means to produce, in a short time, a great change in the appearance of the earth.* The existence of this power is calculated to remove all doubt from the mind regarding those agencies which shall be employed to awaken the buried inhabitants of Time from their wide-spread places of rest. Secondly : *As Spring brings back to us familiar objects, so the resurrection will re-unite us to those we loved, and from whom we had parted on earth, with sorrow.* As then, we visit the resting places of those dear to us on “ God’s acre,” as the Germans term the grave-yard, and see the violets blooming above their tombs, and the buds appearing on the trees, the heart is comforted by those emblems of hope, and feels that those from whom it has parted are not lost, but gone before, and that they shall meet them on the resurrection morn.

II. THE RENEWING OF THE FACE OF THE EARTH IS A TYPE OF A RENEWING OF THE SOUL. The Winter of nature out of which Spring arises, suggests to the mind, by the law of contrast, the moral Winter of the soul, under which a great portion of the human race are living. Men are not in general attracted to nature in Winter. The deep green leaves of Autumn have faded ; the songsters of the grove have departed to more genial homes ; the harvest fields have been reaped ; the flowers are dead, and the wind has lost its cheerful tone, and the blue sky which bends over us wears a less gladdening smile. The cheerful associations of the year are past. The stern aspect of nature, in Winter, produces a saddening influence on the mind, and despair seems to brood over every object which we behold.

The feelings of sadness which come over our spirit when looking at the Winter of nature, are of the same kind as those which arise in our heart, when contemplating the moral

Winter which reigns over many districts of the earth and of our own city. The contrast, too, between nature and society, is more extreme, when we consider that Winter succeeded a period of beauty and fertility, but that the places of moral desolation in the world have always been the same. But as the dead appearance of Winter gives way to the life of Spring, so may the moral Winter of the soul, under appropriate influences, be replaced by a moral Spring.

The Christian missionary or philanthropist who surveys the moral fields of human life, where vice of every kind and form flourishes luxuriantly, will feel his spirit weighed down by the awful wickedness which exists, and of the hopelessness of attempting the work of reformation ; but he will derive consolation and encouragement to begin his work there, by observing the dreariness of Winter succeeded by the beauty and loveliness of Spring.

What a delicious prospect opens before us in the country in the first days of Spring ! The freshness of the air, the opening of the buds on trees and hedge-rows, the flowers breaking through the mould, the soft green of the meadow, the glistening earth of the furrows of the new-ploughed field, the warbling of the soaring lark, the subdued tone of the sky, the glad smile of the sunshine and the signs of renewed life, which are visible, make the heart throb quicker with delight, as we walk over the pasture grounds or by the water-courses. This prospect suggests to the mind the analogy of the renewing of the soul. As the day comes out of night, or as the Spring emerges from Winter, so the soul passes from death into the fresh light of a new life by the power of the Holy Spirit. "Old things pass away and all things become new." The soul now lives in an atmosphere of love ; the affections of the heart gradually expand towards appropriate objects ; envy is replaced by love, joy takes the place of fear, hope is renewed, gratitude is felt and expressed, the worth of life is experienced, and the "peace which passeth knowledge" is enjoyed. And as Spring gives a tone to the sky, the cloud, the air and the fields, so the new life of the



soul, being diffusive, gives a tone and coloring to the thoughts, the feelings, and the actions of the Christian.

This progress of the soul in the Divine life is, in the first place, like the progress of the Spring, *gradual*. Spring, in our climate, does not come on us in a day, like the Springs of the northern climates ; but slowly manifests itself in the unfolding buds and flowers ; in like manner, the soul advances in the Divine life, manifesting its life in right actions in the various relationships of time, a more delicate perception of right and wrong, and a more accurate knowledge of the worth and work of life. Notice, however, that there is a continued struggle in nature before Spring gains the ascendancy over Winter. There are days in the early Spring, in which everything appears full of life and gladness ; and we console ourselves with the thought that the biting winds, the snow-storms, and the dismal days of Winter are past, and that we are now fully to enjoy the pleasures of the Spring. This, however, is not to be our lot. After a day of surpassing beauty, in which heaven and earth seem to be reconciled to each other, we find that envious Winter has stolen in like a thief at night-fall into the territory of Spring, and has blighted its buds—the fair promise of the year—and covered the uplands and the fields with his cold white breath, and frozen the music of the morning larks ; so that Spring seems never to have been.

This appearance of the year may feebly represent the struggle which goes on in the soul, between the old man and the new. Sin does not easily relax its grasp ; old habits are not thrown off at will ; so that the virgin joys of the new life of the soul are often chilled by the cold influences of sin, striving to renew their reign like the Winter. The struggle, too, between Winter and Spring is very unequal. Winter having had for a long period the complete mastery of the earth, holding all things under his sway, is loth to relax his grasp—he is old, but strong : although white with age, his eye is sharp and his step is firm. But Spring, the child of the sun, comes with timid step and innocent smile into the

territory of Winter ; bearing in its hand the peace-offering of the snow-drop, the daisy, and the primrose, and presents them to Winter, whose hard heart relents at these emblems of peace, and he resigns his kingdom to Spring, and retires to rest beneath the violets. Observe, also :—

This progress of the soul in the Divine life is, in the second place, like the progress of Spring, *irresistible*. Winter must give place to Spring. The life which circulates through the trees and hedges, and under ground, may be repressed for a time by the cold, but by the powerful influence of the sun it will manifest itself in buds, and leaves, and flowers. So faith, like a grain of mustard seed in the soul, will germinate and expand, and progress, and establish itself in holy desires, fervent affections, and correct thoughts, under the life-giving influence of the Sun of Righteousness.

This progress of the soul in the Divine life is, thirdly, like the progress of Spring, *pleasing*. As Spring introduces us to new pleasures ; the renewing of the soul leads us to fresh delights. The biting east wind gives place to the soft and balmy south breeze ; the forests are clothed with green, the barren ground is covered with flowers ; the voiceless air is filled with the music of the birds of Spring ; the river flows with a more melodious sound ; the eye is filled with beauty and the ear with music ; a world of joy runs through the heart. In like manner, the soul experiences fresh joys as it advances in holiness ; every step it takes unfolds new sources of pleasure and fresh revelations of love : it may, however, when desponding, long ; like the Israelites for the flesh-pots of Egypt ; but when it contrasts its present state with its past condition, its delights will be deepened, and it will be comforted by the recorded experiences of Christians, as well as by the marvellous exhibitions of the goodness of God, which it has observed.

Spring is a resurrection of forms of life which will have only a temporary existence, but the resurrection of the soul will be everlasting. All the thoughts and actions of man shall be brought to light on the judgment morn of eternity.

III. SPRING IS ILLUSTRATIVE OF YOUTHFUL LIFE. Spring is a period of importance to the husbandman ; so is youth. The farmer anxiously watches for the coming of the seed time :—

“Joyous the impatient husbandman perceives  
Relenting nature, and his lusty steers  
Drives from their stalls, to where the well-used plough  
Lies in the furrow, loosen’d from the post:  
There, unrefusing, to the harness’d yoke  
They lend their shoulder, and begin their toil,  
Cheered by the simple song and soaring lark.  
Meanwhile incumbent o’er the shining share  
The master leans, removes the obstructing clay,  
Winds the whole work and sidelong lays the glebe.”

Thus the poet Thomson describes the first process of the farmer. After the fields have been ploughed, they lie exposed for a time under the influence of the sun and rain. Thereafter the seed is sown, then it is enclosed by the harrow. The farmer commits the seed to the ground, having faith in the regularity of the seasons. He has done his duty. The soil, the rain, the sun, and the moon, will operate on the sown seed, develop its hidden life, and bring it to maturity. Here we notice that in the cultivation of the fields of nature, there is the work of man, and there are the influences of nature. The rains will fall and the sun will shine, but if the husbandman has not prepared the ground and sown the seed, there will be no harvest in Autumn. The mind in youth, must, like the earth, be prepared for the seeds of knowledge. This preparation begins at home, in the first school of life, the parents are the teachers. According to the seeds of knowledge which are sown in the respective mind, so, in all probability, will be the fruit which shall afterwards appear. And as the harrow covers the seed when sown, so prayers must follow the instruction imparted to youth. And as the seed sown by the farmer cannot come to maturity without the influences of nature, so neither will the seeds of Divine knowledge, sown in the mind by parents, come to strength, unless brought under the power of the Sun of Righteousness and the influences of the Holy Spirit.

The agencies which bring to maturity the seeds which are sown in the fields of nature are, in general, of a beneficial kind. The influences, however, which surround the mind of youth are frequently of a hurtful kind, and exercise the most powerful effect on the character, and often destroy the early symptoms of goodness, as the frost nips the buds of Spring, or as insects destroy the leaves. Home influences for the most part determine the future character of the child, as a prosperous or adverse sowing time, the abundance or poverty of the harvest. And if the Spring-time of human life is neglected, the mind will be receiving an unconscious education in evil, where vice will spring up as luxuriantly as the weeds of an uncultivated field.

There is another difference to be noted in the analogy between the sowing-time of Spring and that of young life. The neglect of the farmer to plough the soil and sow the seed in Spring, will produce a temporary loss in Autumn, which will quicken him to seize the opportunity of a coming year ; but when the parents or guardians of youth neglect their moral duties, the sowing-time is lost for ever. Youth, like yesterday, never comes back. It is in manhood that the person, whose home education has been neglected, often feels the irreparable loss. He suffers for the sins of his parents. And there are, moreover, many persons who never know the loss they have sustained, and are consequently living in ignorance of the worth and work of life. Society also suffers for their loss. Suppose for a moment that the farmers of Britain entered into a conspiracy to sow no seed for one year, and the conspiracy was not known till the Autumn came, when the bare fields revealed the secret, what a consternation would be produced throughout the kingdom for the want of bread ! Think you that it would occur the following year ? What then shall be said of the multitudes of youths in our large cities who are growing up in ignorance and crime ? Can the loss to families, to society, and to the kingdom be computed ? Our regret may be that of John Foster : " How much I regret to see so generally abandoned to the weeds of vanity

that fertile and vigorous space of life, in which might be planted the oak and fruit trees of enlightened principles and virtuous habits, which, growing up, would yield to old age an enjoyment, a glory, and a shade."

There are contrasts in nature as well as in youth. As there are some soils, when cultivated, more fertile than others, so there are some minds when properly trained more vigorous and tractable. And as there is no field in nature which may not be made to produce fruit, so there is no human mind which is not susceptible of improvement. There is one difference, however, to be noted between the work of the husbandman and the training of the mind. The farmer may employ men to plough his glebe and sow the grain, but when youth has reached the years of responsibility the work of culture is committed to his own care; and unless the personality of the work of life is known, felt, and acted up to, the person is apt to become a straw in the current of human life, borne onward, heedless of the destiny to which he is going.

Spring is a season of joy; so is youth. Nature casts off the garments of sorrow, which she assumed when Autumn departed, and puts on her robes of joy. Hope is the companion of Spring. The joy which is diffused through the fields of nature is contagious. The drooping heart is revived by the signs of life which everywhere appear, as the fading plant is by water, and anticipates the pleasures of the year. So it is in youth. Hope is our attendant angel. The world wears the aspect of novelty, the spirit is elated by the bounding tide of life. All things appear on the sunny side;—the dark aspect of the world is not yet seen. The unconscious existence, however, of youth soon passes away, like the Spring. The mind is awakened from its dream, and begins to think that life is not to be spent as a holiday, but is to be engaged in as a reality. This is the crisis of life.

Had time permitted, other comparisons might have been drawn from the Spring: for example, as Winter represents the stern side of God's character, Spring represents the ten-



der aspect of it ; Spring is a season of changes, so is the period of youth ; Spring is a season of beauty, so is the time of childhood. These may afford subjects for after consideration.

The advice of Cowper is worthy of being noticed :—

“ Acquaint thyself with God, if thou would’st taste  
His works. Admitted only to his embrace,  
Thou shalt perceive that thou wast blind before :  
Thine eye shall be instructed ; and thine heart,  
Made pure, shall relish, with divine delight,  
’Till then unfelt, what hands divine have wrought.”

So that in witnessing and studying the grand transformations of nature, we may feel—

“That there lives and works

A soul in all things, and that soul is God.”

Glasgow.

D. M. W.

#### SUBJECT :—*Apostacy.*

“Then all the disciples forsook him and fled.”—Matt. xxvi. 56.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Ninety-first.

“THEN,” after the wonderful things that occurred during the twenty-four preceding hours, “the disciples forsook him,” &c. In this apostacy we discover four things:—

I. BASE INGRATITUDE. First : *Those disciples had received special favors from Him.* Those favors were of a *material and spiritual* character. Secondly : *The greater the kindness received, the greater the obligation to gratitude.* None on earth were under such obligations as these disciples. Thirdly : *The tendency of strong gratitude is to bind to their benefactor.* “If I forget thee let my right hand,” &c. These three facts show the ingratitude of their apostacy. We have here :—

II. RASH IMPULSIVENESS. When they saw that He was *actually* going to be crucified, which they had never really expected, they rushed, by a sudden impulse, away. Two things, perhaps, roused this impulse :—First : *Disappointment.*

Up to the last they expected He would deliver Himself. Secondly: *Alarm*. They felt now that they would be left helpless amidst a world of enemies. To act from impulse is to sin; (1) against our reflective nature: (2) against our moral interest. We have here:—III. INVOLUNTARY INFLUENCE. “All” fled. Probably, no suggestion to flee was made by either. He who moved first, did not, perhaps, intend to move others, did not wish it. But one moved, and all moved. Thus we act involuntarily upon each other. This involuntary influence should:—First: *Act as an incentive to become thoroughly sound in character*. Secondly: *Make us cautious as to the associations we form*. We have here:—IV. FALSE POLICY. “They fled.” Did they serve themselves by this? No. What is wrong in principle can never be expedient in action. What is really right is for ever politic. First: *Doing wrong even to save the body injures the soul—the man*. Secondly: *Doing wrong to save the body, endangers the soul*. A man may defend his body, and kill his own soul in the defence. From the whole subject, learn:—First: *The importance of cherishing a practical impression of our obligations to Christ*. This will bind us to Him. Secondly: *The importance of cultivating the habit of acting from intelligent conviction*. Do not let impulse govern. Let reason be at the helm. Thirdly: *The importance of habitually realizing the principle, that the path of duty is the path of safety*.

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SUBJECT:—*A Turbulent Scene and a Tranquil God.*

“The Lord sitteth upon the flood.”—Ps. xxix. 10.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Ninety-second.

THIS Psalm shows the influence of Godliness upon the intellectual faculties, the social sympathies, and the religious instincts of human nature. The texts gives us:—I. A TURBULENT SCENE. “A flood.” A flood suggests:—First: *Commotion*. The moral domain is all commotion. Look at it

*spiritually* : "There is no peace, saith my God," &c. Look at it *socially*,—*nationally*. Souls are all in commotion here. A flood suggests :—Secondly : *Innovation*. It has broken down barriers, &c. So have souls. A flood suggests :—Thirdly : *Distress*. It is furious and violent, &c. The moral world is not like a river, flowing on peacefully in its channel ; Nor like the ocean, moving, even when most tumultuous, within its own proper boundaries. It is a "flood." II. A TRANQUIL GOD. "The Lord sitteth." This implies on His part :—First : *A consciousness of His right to reign*. If He had any moral misgivings He would not be at ease. An usurper could not be tranquil over such a tumultuous empire. This implies :—Secondly : *A consciousness of a supremacy of power to reign*. He has no feeling of incapacity. He can control with consummate ease the whole. We rejoice in His supremacy over the flood.

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SUBJECT :—*One in Ten.*

"Were there not ten cleansed?" &c.—Luke xvii. 17.

Analysis of *Hontly the Two Hundred and Ninety-third.*

THIS is the language of disappointed love ; and the narrative teaches :—I. THAT MOST MEN UNDER GREAT TRIAL WILL APPLY TO HEAVEN FOR RELIEF. The leprosy was a great affliction. *Painful, infectious, hereditary, and incurable* by ordinary means. Men are all theists in great trial. II. THAT GOD SOMETIMES ATTENDS TO THE PRAYERS EVEN OF UN-GODLY MEN. All were healed. There are some prayers which God binds Himself to answer ; there are others that He may answer or not. III. THAT WHILST MOST PRAY IN DISTRESS, ONLY THE GOOD WILL FEEL TRUE GRATITUDE FOR DELIVERANCE. Only one returned. Gratitude was expected from all,—was the obligation of all. IV. THAT WHERE TRUE GRATITUDE EXISTS IT WILL SHOW ITSELF. This one came and gave thanks. It will show itself :—First : *Voluntarily*. Secondly : *Humbly* Thirdly : *Independently—alone.*

# Literary Notices.

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

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## THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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"THE GALLED JADE WILL WINCE." That an author should feel somewhat uncomfortable when his book has not received so much praise as he thinks it deserves, and still more when it has been censured, is, perhaps, to be expected. Nor should it surprise if such discomfort extend to friends or even to the publisher. Nay, to review honestly is sometimes painful to the man who does it. To give pain can only be agreeable to a nature below the average of reviewers; while to give offence is not the choice of the prudent. But what is the alternative? A reviewer who praised everything might earn the character of amiable from authors and publishers, but would be unjust to his readers. Even the author may be benefited by fair criticism and injured by insincere praise. But this is not the place for an essay on the ethics of reviewing. Yet the manifestly fast diminishing confidence in what are termed "Notices of Books," the utter worthlessness of some in regard to judgment or sincerity, and certain rumours afloat touching our gentleness, demanded so much. To be chained to the oar of the galley were a condition more favourable to self-respect, than to hold a pen bound to praise all that emanated from certain men, certain houses, certain cliques. Whatever you may think of our judgment, reader, we neither intentionally nor slothfully mislead. However carefully we may endeavor to adjust the claims of duty to the public and considerateness for the author, there are yet occasions when indulgence to the author means injustice to the public and injury to the reviewed.

THEISM, DOCTRINAL AND PRACTICAL; or, Didactic Religious Utterances. By Francis W. Newman. London: John Chapman.

THE publication of this work marks an era in the history of "Natural Religion." Since the days of Woollaston we know of nothing of the kind so remarkable. It consists of Three Books. The first unfolds, in a very masterly way, "The Theory of Religion." The argument for

the being of God, from the instincts of animals, and "the conscience which is in us and above us, but not of us," ascending step by step, and growing in strength as it rises, is, to us, as satisfactory as beautiful. The truth, that it is only from conscience that we discern God to possess moral qualities, is clearly and forcibly put; as well as this other, that the present Atheists or Cosmists, who worship truth and goodness, are unconscious worshippers of God. The argument for "the Immortality of God's Beloved" is very congenial to the Christian heart. The ninety chapters of this first Book treat the subject in a systematic manner. Of course we cannot specify all the topics. Free Will, Prayer, the Attributes of God, Death, Faith, the Soul, Brotherhood of Men, are some, and are dealt with in a way which is most suggestive and delightful. The second Book contains sixteen chapters on similar topics, which are here set forth in aphorisms. The third Book, which resumes the style of the first, is of a practical character.

There is much, very much, in this work, of the highest importance, dealing as it does with those beliefs which lie at the basis of Christianity. This region, which has been too much neglected by Christians, is here explored and described by one who could hardly be called a Christian, and who, we suppose, would not greatly desire the name;—at least in the sense in which it is usually understood. "The religion of Nature" is able, without losing its proper character, to receive aid from Christianity. This book furnishes a conclusive instance to the point, although we think the author has not made all the use of Christianity which he might with perfect consistency have done. The character of the Bible, which, leaving for the moment its other claims in suspense, may surely be regarded as peerless in literature, morality and religion, cannot safely be ignored by the philosopher. It is as much a fact, and may be made as fruitful an argument for Theism, as the order of nature; the instincts of animals; and the conscience of man. Yet "the religion of Nature," of course, is not logically dependent upon Christianity for its existence; but Christianity does depend upon "the religion of Nature," which, throughout the Scriptures, is recognised and pre-supposed as underlying the whole Christian structure. It is therefore the more deplorable that this department should be so greatly neglected. To any one, who, feeling the necessity for such investigation, should be inclined to enter upon it, this work, might, with certain obvious exceptions, be strongly commended as a suggestive aid. In passing, we are pleased to find in the January Number of "The Church of England Quarterly Review," a profoundly philosophical and thoroughly masterly article on *Theism*, which should be read in connexion with the work under notice.

We believe that the religion of Professor Newman has an uncommon character of excess and defect, which is, and is likely to remain,



peculiar to himself. Notwithstanding the fascination of this work, we do not think it at all probable that many will be induced, by the study of it, to share his position. Most of them who go so far with him will probably be disposed to go further. The disposition to halt where he does would result either from native idiosyncracies, or from a peculiar history, or from both in combination. The fact is, that much which is usually regarded as peculiar to Christianity is taught in this book; is connected indeed by ingenious logic with the first principles of reason, and yet is such as no one unacquainted with the Christian revelation ever has discovered or ever would have discovered. Perhaps the Professor's stopping short of Christianity is mainly owing to the neglect of what has been termed "the evidence of continuity:" the principle of which he recognises where he says, p. 117, "When the teacher announces a truth to be received on his authority, the learner must receive it *as such*, and expect hereafter to know it more fully." This is the germ, out of which the sunshine of devout sagacity and the dew of candor might soon develop a genuine Christian faith. All prejudice laid aside, arising from early association or from controversy, which "whets the intellect, but starves, or, what is worse, poisons the heart," must we not see that this virtually admits the very principle of faith in the authority of Scripture? "The writers of Hebrew and Christian books" *do* "advance" the very highest conceivable "pretensions." Much of what is contained in Scripture is indeed confirmed at once by the common conscience, even if hitherto not fully brought into view. Much, again, is verified, when fairly tried, by the test of experience. That which was only half believed at first, has been found to be true. Still further, much which is asserted by the writers of Scripture must ever remain beyond our power to verify in the present state. Sound reason here, as it seems to us, introduces the principle of authority, or the evidence of continuity. Lastly; it is incredible that men of uncommon sagacity, of great honesty, and of great spiritual insight, should be capable of adopting the calm historical style for the narration of events which they are essentially misrepresenting;—it is equally incredible that they should be essentially wrong in their religious interpretation of those facts.

The reader is not to suppose, however, that this volume contains any very marked attacks on the peculiarities of Christianity. With the exception of one or two chapters, as that on Self-convicted Teachers, and that on Sacred Books, to both of which we decidedly object, and of a passage here and there besides, we have observed little which might not have been written by a Christian.

The author's previous works, "The Soul" and "Phases of Faith," will be fresh in the memory of many of our readers. Those writings

had great defects, which were successfully exposed, and were chargeable, the latter especially, with the gravest objections. Yet they had also their excellencies, which we think it right to say were, in our judgment, very unjustly overlooked; while their defects were too exclusively dealt with by the critics. We also have a conscientious objection to the laughing criticism on such topics. After the perusal of those books we were less inclined to mirth than to sadness. While the present work is less objectionable than the former, its excellencies are greater and more prominent. Nine years of thought, experience and observation, have also taught the author several modifications in his mode of presenting the doctrine of Theism. Thus, he now avows distinctly, that the evidence for the being of God is as direct as that for the existence of other human minds than our own. Again, he makes the evidence from animal instinct more prominent than heretofore. Also, in arguing against the objection, that, because God is incomprehensible, we had better leave the subject as beyond our knowledge, he lays stress on the truth, that this incomprehensibility is not peculiar to divine things. "All things are to us incomprehensible." The objection, therefore, by proving too much, proves nothing. The chapters on "Animal Instinct," "God in Conscience," "Spiritual Prayer," "Intuition and Verification," and "Axioms of Religion," deal with their respective subjects in a way which is wholly new. The distinct statement of axioms as such, and the placing of them together in a multitude, is also new. The latter half of the first Book develops doctrines which were untouched in the treatise on "The Soul," and indicates, we think, considerable progress in the right direction since. The Professor is evidently not the man to have been frightened into this; but an independent and honest thinker, right we believe at heart, though intellectually wrong. We trust that he will continue to advance in the same direction. "Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man it shall be forgiven him."

Nor may the Professor forego its peace,  
 \_\_\_\_\_ when in the dusk  
 Of his life, \_\_\_\_\_  
 And when thicker and thicker, the darkness fills  
 The world, \_\_\_\_\_  
 And he gropes for something more substantial.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 May Christ do for him, what no mere man shall,  
 And stand confest as the God of salvation!

The first and third Books are thrown into versicles, having a certain rhythm, resembling that of Martin Tupper, but, we presume, not borrowed from him. Were the work on that account to be called

“didactic poetry,” there would be no lack of precedents from Lucretius downwards. But whether it be a poem or not, we leave to the judgment of the reader. The form has advantages and disadvantages. As in the case of Sir Roger De Coverley’s signboard, much may be said on both sides;—and taste must decide. Sentences pregnant with meaning, and passages of exquisite beauty, occur. On the whole, it reminds us more of the Wisdom of Ben Sirach than of any other book. Perhaps we had better conclude with a specimen.

“So from Science comes to Religion its bony fabric and solidity,  
 Its simple and consistent strength, its harmony and its purity,  
 Its grandeur and dignity, its universality.  
 But the science of matter cannot give knowledge of soul,  
 Nor teach of Free Will and of Habit, of the Conscience and of Right,  
 Nor supersede all study of the mind and its actions,  
 Nor furnish with true sentiment, with right loves and right hatreds,  
 Nor investigate spiritual phenomena or spiritual laws,  
 And cover our bony fabric with flesh, and fill it with life.  
 These topics may haply be all at length grasped in one New Science,  
 Aided by the hints of earlier science, and following their clue:  
 But as Geometry cannot teach optics, though it gives good service,  
 So neither can all the Physical Sciences together teach religion.  
 And he who, thinking himself a philosopher, studies the outer world  
     alone,  
 Passing by Consciousness and Conscience, the Moral and the Spiritual,  
 He makes himself but a half-philosopher, and does no justice to truth;  
 But all Truth is valuable and mutually aiding; for all is harmony in  
     God.”

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INDIA: Its History, Religion and Government. London: Jarrold and Sons.

THE GREAT INDIAN MUTINY OF 1857: Its Causes, Features and Results. By the Rev. James Kennedy, M.A. London: Ward and Co.

THE MORAL OF A SAD STORY: Four Sermons on the Indian Mutiny. By John Hampden Gurney, M.A. London: Rivingtons.

To the ancient world of the West, India was a land of mystery. Ideas respecting it were undefined and romantic. The cloud has remained hitherto mostly undispelled: for even England, who had the best reasons for investigation, has labored under blameworthy and disastrous ignorance of the immense territory and population which she has been governing. No country under heaven has richer natural resources than India; and this, together with the countless crowds of

her sons, renders the subject one of stupendous practical importance. However our Indian empire was gained, the fact of its existence and all the responsibility stare us in the face. Weakly to evade this by abandoning the country to its fate, were insane counsel;—ruinous to it and injurious to ourselves. But if we are to govern India, we must understand it. Every Englishman shares this responsibility, and, next to the knowledge of his own country, the knowledge of this chief dependence is incumbent upon him.

The little work which stands first on our list above, constitutes a valuable compendium of facts, which should, at the present juncture, be welcome to Englishmen. It gives trustworthy information, geographical, historical, religious, and political. Particularly meritorious is the account of the genesis of the various religions; the monstrous mythologies, the stupendous Pantheism. The work is anonymous; but is understood to be the production of one of the most earnest and practical, as well as eloquent of the men of our day. It has our cordial recommendation.

The Rev. James Kennedy has had the advantage of residence at Benares for several years. His pamphlet is valuable as the production of one able to observe, to reason, and to give counsel. We hope it will have a wide circulation amongst the people, and be well pondered by our rulers, and especially by all who may in future represent British authority in India.

Mr. Gurney's Four Sermons present the bearings of Christianity and Christian missions on India, in earnest and effective style. It is truly refreshing to find a minister, like the author, giving a manful utterance to convictions which run against the popular sentiment of the hour. There is a valuable appendix of illustrative notes. We agree with the author, that "Englishmen defer too much to 'The Times;'" and that "the certainty that people at home would, by tempted and excited men [in India], after reading its articles, be supposed to think as 'The Times' thinks, fastens a responsibility on the men who wield such a mighty influence."

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THE CONGREGATIONAL PSALMIST. Edited by the Rev. Henry Allon and H. J. Gauntlett, Mus. Doc. Part I. Ward and Co.

THE first purpose of the Editors appears to have been merely to provide a few Tunes as a Supplement to "The Psalmist;" but as they proceeded with their work they wisely determined to throw aside that once popular, but mistaken production, as altogether unsuited to the end they had in view, viz., the improvement of Congregational Psalmody.

It is more than twenty years ago that "The Psalmist" made its appearance;—since then a better acquaintance with the works of classical authors has elevated the public taste, and educated it to understand and appreciate the truly good and excellent.

"The Psalmist" abounds in crude harmonies of unprepared dissonances, augmented and diminished intervals, and other difficulties, which are wholly unfitted for Congregational Singing. This style of harmonizing is permissible only as an Organ accompaniment to the melody while the people sing the air of the tune altogether,—*i.e.* in unison.

No one knows this better than Dr. Gauntlett: experience has taught him, and he candidly acknowledges it both in the Preface of the Work, and what is better still, by the improved and altered structure of all his late productions; he finds that vigorous simple harmonies, easy of execution, produce a better and more lasting effect—shall we say a more religious effect—on the mind than the maudlin progressions of chromatic harmony. The Doctor promises us vigorous simple harmonies, and we are right glad to say that in the main he has ably performed his promise. We wish we could admit that he has kept faith with us in giving the Melodies of all the Chorales intact:—at the first sight of them we had our misgivings, and on comparing them with the standard works of the great German masters we find slight deviations from the original. We do not say they are unskilfully made, or that the melodies suffer materially, but we condemn the practice altogether, and if one is permitted to do so without rebuke, we shall soon have bolder infringements made, until at last these glorious melodies are entirely frittered away.\*

We regret to see some tunes of very questionable character admitted into this work:—an apology is made in the Preface for being *compelled* to admit them; but why should a man of eminence in the musical profession be compelled to pander to a vitiated popular taste? Why not make a bold stand at once against all solicitations from whatever quarter they may emanate? A few years hence when this Work reaches a subsequent edition, the pruning knife must go to work, and these tunes will be cut off as withered branches.

We have, lastly, the most pleasing part of our duty to fulfil; we have to welcome this book as one which upon the whole is a treasure—it is enriched by many valuable tunes expressly composed for it by Dr. Gauntlett, and we most heartily recommend it to our friends.

\* These remarks apply also to the old Latin Hymn Melodies which the Doctor has altered for this Work,



**THE COMMENTARY, WHOLLY BIBLICAL**; an Exposition in the very Words of Scripture. Quarterly Parts, I., II., III., IV., and V. London: Samuel Bagster and Sons.

THE title explains the nature of the work, which is one of transcendent worth. We have long participated in the conviction which originated this praiseworthy, arduous, and in every sense, responsible undertaking:—that the Bible contains within itself an infallible exposition of its own truths. The principle of comparing spiritual things with spiritual things, and making The Book its own interpreter, is, we rejoice, beginning at length to be appreciated and applied. Were the translation of the Sacred Volume perfect in every point we could afford to part with all other commentaries for this “Wholly Biblical” one. No work, in our judgment, has ever issued from Paternoster Row of equal worth, in all respects, to this; and as it has such intrinsic merits, strong claims to the attention of every one who would understand “the things of the Spirit,” as it stands alone; and has at present nothing in the shape of competition;—we fully expect for it, what we earnestly desire, and what it justly deserves, an unprecedented circulation. We shall be glad to see the completing numbers.

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**THE BOOK OF PSALMS**, according to the Authorized Version; arranged in Parallelism. With a Preface and Explanatory Notes. London: The Religious Tract Society.

WE always hail a well judged effort to facilitate the use, and increase the benefit, of the Book of Psalms. The title says so much of this volume that we need say the less. Perhaps it would have been as well, or better, in a separate publication of the Psalms, to have cautiously and sparingly emended the Authorized Version, giving a few of the most needed corrections of the best scholars, than to have merely reprinted it. The preface is short, but good. The prefaces to each Psalm, and the notes are appropriate and valuable. They appear to be essentially the same with those in the “Annotated Paragraph Bible,” which we have formerly commended earnestly; and we think the Society has done well to place them separately in this neat, attractive, and convenient volume.

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**JOSEPH**; a Sacred Drama. By Joseph Morris, Narberth. Carmarthen: Willie Spurnell.

THIS little Book shows unquestionably that Mr. Morris thoroughly understands and is well competent to work the Dramatic principle.

He is capable of taking up, and effectually representing, the spirit of the characters he brings on the stage. The spirit of Joseph and of each of his brethren sigh and sing in these pages. There are some passages of great poetic merit and sublimity.

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THE OUTLINES OF THEOLOGY; or, the General Principles of Revealed Religion briefly stated: designed for the use of Families and Students in Divinity. By the Rev. James Clark. London: Ward and Co.

NONE can read these volumes without feeling, as he proceeds, increasing respect for their worthy author. The title has a measure of appropriateness, and gives a tolerably fair idea of the work. The doctrine derives, through old and new Puritanism, from the Scriptures. The book has more wisdom than wit, more worth than pretence; is good rather than great, sober without magnificence, serviceable but not surprising; and less adapted for "students in divinity" than for the steadier members of the "family." The Second Volume brings down the subject as far as "the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit."

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THE PENALTIES OF GREATNESS. By the Rev. Robert Ferguson. LL.D., F.R.S.L. London: Ward and Co. The best part of this book is the descriptive; which is also, happily, the largest. Information and pleasure may be received from it, without any great effort. The method is to illustrate "the penalties of greatness" by examples, Moses, Socrates, Themistocles, Paul, Dante, Wycliffe, Columbus, Luther, Xavier, Tycho Brahe, Kepler, Galileo, the Pilgrim Fathers, and Cromwell. VOICES FROM THE ROCKS, &c. A Reply to the late HUGH MILLER's "Testimony of the Rocks." London: Judd and Glass. We are too well convinced of the trustworthiness of the results of modern geologic science, and of the general principles of such men as Pyc Smith and Hugh Miller, to attach importance to this production, or to sympathize with any attempt to explain away the clear evidence of facts, in order to make out a case for revelation. The Bible needs no such advocacy. CORONA: and other Poems. By E. J. Reed. London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans and Roberts. It is rare to find the essence of a true poem, and rarer still to find in combination with it the dexterous skill which is born of study of the best examples, and long and careful practice. We like this volume much. It is truthful, and has enthusiasm, imagination, and polish. Let the author re-consider the resolve for future silence.

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# A HOMILY

ON

## “The Chamber of Imagery.”

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“And he brought me to the door of the court ; and when I looked, behold a hole in the wall. Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall : and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door. And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here. So I went in and saw ; and behold every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, pourtrayed upon the wall round about. And there stood before them seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel, and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, with every man his censer in his hand ; and a thick cloud of incense went up. Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, the Lord seeth us not ; the Lord hath forsaken the earth.”—Ezekiel viii. 7—12.

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**E**ZEKIEL and Daniel were prophets who exercised their ministry amongst the Jews in Babylon, during their period of captivity. The scene of Ezekiel's prediction was in the neighborhood of Chebar, a river which flows into the Euphrates, about two hundred miles to the north of Babylon. He appears to have been about thirty years of age when he was called to his work, and he continued his prophetic career for upwards of twenty years. From the account which we have, in the first verse of this chapter, of “The elders of the Jews” coming to him to enquire after a message from God; we may justly infer that he, by his teaching and his spirit, exercised a most salutary and commanding influence over his oppressed contemporaries.

It has been remarked by some Biblical critics, that the prophetic character seemed to absorb the whole of this man's being. His individuality seems lost in the divine office to which he was called. Personal peculiarities and private incidents are scarcely seen in his history. "The hand of the Lord," the divine afflatus is so completely upon him, that his eyes see the vision, his heart pulsates with the feeling, his will moves in the circle, and his voice echoes the utterances of the Eternal. To be thus the messenger of God, to burn with His inspiration—to have all private interests absorbed in the Infinite will, our very being betrothed to universal truths, and made one with all that is good, great, and God-like in the creation, is the perfection of our nature, the destiny for which we are made. A moral transcendentalism this devoutly to be wished.

The central point of our prophet's prediction is the destruction of Jerusalem. Although great numbers of the Jewish people had been carried captive into Babylon, greater numbers still were left behind under the Babylonian yoke, in possession of their own land and institutions. The latter cherished the hope of being able to deliver themselves from the Chaldean power ; and the former, namely, those who were captive, were looking for a speedy return to their own land. Jeremiah was the prophet of the former, and Ezekiel that of the latter. Ezekiel assures his brother captives that instead of their speedy return to Jerusalem, the city had yet to be destroyed.

In the text the prophet gives an account of a divine vision which he had of the sins which were going on in the Temple of Jerusalem, and which would assuredly bring on its destruction. In vision he is wafted from Babylon to the door of the court of the Temple in Jerusalem. In this court he finds a wall which seems to have been built in order to conceal the idolatries which were secretly practised by the elders in "The chambers of the Temple." He examines this wall and discovers "a hole" in it, through which, perhaps, he could catch such a glimpse of the enormities that were

being enacted inside as to heighten his curiosity. He is commanded "to dig" down the wall, in order to get a fuller view of the inside. He complies, and discovers in his digging, a private door of admission which had been walled up. By this door he enters at the divine command, and in that dark "chamber of imagery" what a horrid scene of iniquity presents itself! There, where the one true and living God was wont to be worshipped, he saw his countrymen engaged in their devotions to the most contemptible deities of idolatrous nations. There were figured on the wall the creeping creatures, and the abominable beasts, that the Egyptians used to worship, "and all the idols of the house of Israel." It was a kind of pantheon;—gods gathered from distant nations were pictured on those walls. There he saw a conclave of seventy persons dressed in the garb of priests, probably photographs of the very members of the Jewish Sanhedrim, the chief council of the nations. They stood in the attitude of devotion—each had a golden censer in his hand, containing all the costly and odoriferous materials which the pomp and magnificence of the Egyptian ritual required. Other scenes also did he there witness in the vision, which are recorded in the subsequent verses, indicating a base development of superstition and idolatry.

It must be remarked, that this vision of Ezekiel was a faithful representation of what was *actually* going on amongst his countrymen in Judea; and that such atrocious immoralities and impurities justified that judgment which he foretold would yet descend upon that country. From this vision we learn the following truths:—

I. THAT MAN HAS A WONDERFUL POWER OF VISION BEYOND THAT OF THE SENSES. Ezekiel, now hundreds of miles away on the banks of the Chebar, saw what was going on in the most secret recesses of Jerusalem. Man's power of mental vision is seen not only in the creation of dreams, and the production of poetry, but also in the sorrows of the apprehensive, the joys of the hopeful, the wealth of the ava-



ricious, and power of the ambitious, which live only in the imagination. There is not a man, however destitute of genius, that does not see things with the inner eye that no one else has ever seen, and that will never come within the sweep of his material vision. Each man lives in a world of his own creation. We are all authors of fiction, whether we write romances or not. "The dullest plodder," says Dr. Thomas Brown, "over the obscurest desk, who sums up in the evening his daily tables of profit and loss, and who rises in the morning with the sole object of adding a few ciphers to that book of pounds and pence which contains the whole annual history of his life,—even he, while he half lays down his quill to think of future prices or future demands, or future possibilities of loss, has his visions and inspiration like the sublimest poet ; visions of a very different kind indeed from those to which poets are accustomed, but involving as truly the inspiration of fancy !"

There are at least two facts in relation to this power which, because they are in keeping with the practical design of this homily, it is desirable to propound.

First : *That through this power God frequently reveals the greatest truths.* A large portion of the Bible is made up of a record of visions. "In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed ; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man." Abraham, and the patriarchs ; Moses, Samuel, Isaiah, and the prophets ; Paul, John, and the apostles—all had visions. These visions were eternal realities presented to the inner eye of the soul by God, in frequently strange and grotesque, but always symbolic, forms. Abraham's "burning lamp ;" Isaiah's "throne, high and lifted up ;" Ezekiel's stupendous machine, with "wheels within wheels ;" Daniel's colossal "image ;" Peter's "great sheet knit at the four corners and let down to the earth ;" and John's mighty wonders in Patmos ; are all divine pictures of eternal things, and presented to the inner eye of the soul by the great Father

of Spirits. What Ezekiel saw now were representations of the real moral state of the Jewish people. This "chamber of imagery" was a picture drawn by God of the corrupt and Pagan principles that now ruled the heart of Israel.

Though the age of infallible inspiration may be over, and though now in the purest souls there are many optical illusions, the greatest truths, notwithstanding, still come to man in the visions of his imagination. All sciences start from hypotheses. The poet catches by intuition that which philosophers organize into systems. This material universe is but spirit in costume,—“a vesture;” its myriads of objects are but eternal thoughts run into palpable forms. Imagination with her keen eyes looks through the garb, sees the divine ideas, moulds them into shapes of her own, and clothes them in an airy fabric of her own weaving.

Secondly : *Through this power man will derive much of his happiness or misery for ever.* It must not be supposed because the things the men inspired of God saw were *within* rather than without,—discovered by the mind rather than by the outward eye,—that they were not *real*. The true things that are seen by the mind are far more real to man, and more real to the universe, than those that are merely seen by the bodily eye. Nay, the outward is only real to us as we form images of it in our own minds. It was a true state of things that Ezekiel now beheld. Man has no universe worth mentioning but that which comes reflected from the mirror of his own soul. God hath indeed put “the world in a man’s heart.”

We say that from this power of inner vision much of our happiness or misery must be derived. One of our British bards has sung in lofty and touching strains of “The Pleasures of the Imagination.” Blessed power this ! By it, however poor and abject our worldly condition, we can make a bright world for ourselves. By it, the sightless bard of England made for himself a sunny paradise, amidst whose enchanting scenes he struck from his lyre those supernatural strains that shall thrill the ages yet to come. The greatest misery too

comes out of this. Let the imagination become the creature of a guilty conscience, and it shall create a hell as dark and deep as that which Dante made. It shall bring visions such as Eliphaz saw, who said, "Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake; the hair of my flesh stood up."

II. THAT THE DEGENERATING TENDENCY IN THE MOST ADVANCED PEOPLE HAS EVER BEEN STRONG. Here we have the Jews, the most privileged people under Heaven. For nine hundred years they had been under the special training of God. He inspired the founders of their Commonwealth, fought their battles, frequently interposed miraculously for the protection of their existence and the supply of their wants. He gave them a country the most fruitful under heaven; a system of worship the most magnificent and elevating; a code of laws the most righteous and sanative. He spoke to them through prophets, and communed with them through priests. He caused the symbol of His presence to gleam through its mystic radiance always in their midst. He gave them through every period of their history, "line upon line and precept upon precept;" and yet these very people now had sunk into the lowest depths of idolatry and superstition. This tendency is seen in the history of all other nations. It has proved itself stronger than all the elevating forces that have been employed;—stronger in Tyre than its commerce,—in Egypt than its learning, in Greece than its philosophy, in Rome than its civilization, and in Judea than its religion.

Such a tendency as this, which every page of the world's history records, is sufficient:—

First: *To repudiate the atheistic notion that the original state of man was that of savagism; and to confirm the Biblical doctrine that "God made man upright, but that he sought out many inventions."* I believe in the natural capacity of man to rise from the lowest state of barbarism to civilization and religion. He has faculties, facilities, and impulses, for the

purpose ; but I believe that he has never done so except in connexion with divine help. If a man is to sink from the highest civilization, he has only to be left alone ;—if he is to rise from barbarism, he must be lifted by a divine hand. There is in the heart of humanity, as existing here, a moral gravitation which will bear it down from the highest elevations of culture and excellence without the counteracting influences of heaven.

Such a tendency serves :—

Secondly : *To show that it behoves the most advanced people to be humble.* England has reached an unequalled point in what may be called material civilization. But let us remember, that it is not the perfection of arts, nor the force of arms, nor the greatness of commerce, nor even the extent of learning, that can give true stability to a people. “Righteousness exalteth a nation,” &c. If we are to judge of our country by the articles of a sycophant press, or by the talk of the multitude who draw their opinions from its puffing pages, or by the wild hyperboles of superficial poets, who may say that we have reached our millennium. But if we penetrate beneath the surface of society, “dig down” the concealing “wall,” enter the “chamber of imagery,”—mark the *ignorance, immorality, irreligion, and vice* that everywhere prevail ;—look at the whole in the light of this blessed Book ; I conceive that the conclusion will be that from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot we are diseased ; that we are in the “gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity.” Let us not imagine that we are as great and good as we are represented to be ; but *ever realize the fact* that the degenerating tendency, that brought to the dust the mighty dynasties of ancient times, and ruined even Judea—the nation that had been exalted to heaven—is working in our heart, and may yet bring on our ruin.

What is thus true of nations is also true of individuals. The spirit of the most perfect man “cleaveth to the dust.” If your natures have been quickened into sympathy with truth, if holy principles have been implanted in your spirit, if

"old things with you have passed away," still you are not yet safe. There is a degenerating power within you ; a power which disgraced the Patriarchs, brought guilt upon the conscience of David, and well nigh ruined Peter ; a law in your members, against whose working you must ever contend. Let your prayer be—"Hold thou me up and I shall be safe."

III. THAT THE GREATEST SINS OF HUMANITY ARE GENERALLY THE HIDDEN ONES. "Hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chamber of his imagery?" Outwardly, in their daily business and ordinary concerns, the Jews, it may be, appeared as the servants of that God, whom, as a people, they had professed to serve through many ages in the past. But here, within this enclosed "chamber in the Temple," shut in from all public gaze, the true soul of the people is seen. Here their moral portraits were drawn upon the wall. Here they appeared in their genuine garb—in all the native pollution of their hearts, and deformity of their character.

We have only the power to look upon the outside of human life. We judge of the morality of a population by outward acts. We get statistics of outward worshippers and condemned criminals, of churches, chapels, hospitals, theatres ; view them in connexion with the general population, and form our opinion as to the real character of the people. This is what we do,—this is all we can do : but this is really deceptive. To judge character is not our prerogative. Could we open the door of England's soul, as the prophet opened the door of "the chamber of imagery," our opinion of its character, I presume, would be greatly modified if not reversed. We should see selfishness in the benevolent, blood-guiltiness in the humane, despotism in the outwardly liberal, lasciviousness in the chaste, arrogance in the humble, infidelity in the pious, idolatry in temples built for God. It is not the hand, nor the tongue, nor any member of the body that performs the act ;—the volition is the act. All that



the body does is but to give a visible expression of it—to make it manifest to men. “As a man thinketh in his heart so is he:”—so is he really in himself and before God and His holy universe.

First : *Man has the power to conceal sins.* This place, as we have already observed, was walled up—all the arrangements were such as to promote secrecy. The flowers of the field, the stars of heaven, the beasts of the forest, and the birds of the air, are all as they appear to be ; they have no power to conceal themselves : but men have the power to misrepresent themselves, to assume an outward character which has no agreement whatever with the real state of the heart. The most depraved can array himself almost as an angel of light, and thus conceal the true state of the soul.

Secondly : *Man as a sinner has the strongest temptations to concealment.* The more wicked a man is, the more temptation he has to be a hypocrite. A bad man to live *in* society, and to live *by* it, must necessarily be a hypocrite. He dares not show his dark heart, otherwise his compeers would not either associate with him or trust him. Were wicked men in society to be sincere with each other—to show in reality their own real hearts, they could have no fellowship together—they would flee from each other as from demons. The depraved *tradesman, lawyer, physician, and statesman,* must build a thick wall around their “chamber of imagery,” or they could not live. Half the conventional teaching of schools consist in the art of building walls around the chambers of the heart. Virtue only can be sincere, virtue is not ashamed to show itself—it has no closed doors, no deeds of darkness ; it courts the light, it expands and blooms in sunshine.

IV. THAT AN INSIGHT OF THE HIDDEN INIQUITY OF A POPULATION IS A NECESSARY QUALIFICATION FOR A TRUE REFORMER. Jehovah gave Ezekiel a view of the moral abominations of his countrymen in order that he might be fitted to discharge his mission—that he might be solemnly

earnest in calling them to repentance, and in order that he might concur with the justice of the judgments which he had to pronounce. Isaiah, before entering on his mission, was made to feel that he dwelt in the midst of a people of "unclean lips;" Paul looked upon the world as "dead in trespasses and sins. What a view had Jesus of the world when He bowed His knees to heaven, and said, "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee!"

A deep insight of the enormity of sin serves three important purposes in relation to a reformer.

First: *It serves to impress him with the justice of human suffering.* The evil of man is great upon him. He is "born to trouble as the sparks fly upward." The birth and death of every man are associated with anguish; and sorrow and trial, in the case of most, darken each intervening stage. What floods of tears every day bedew the soil! What groans and sighs every day pulsate in the atmosphere! What regrets of disappointment! What sorrows of bereavement! What pangs of remorse! What agony of terror! Far down, beneath all that is cheerful and gay in life, there is an ever-heaving tide of anguish, whose billows never cease to roll over human hearts. How are you to reconcile all this suffering, not merely with the goodness and mercy of God, but with His justice? Why, amidst the singing tribes of air, and the sportive creatures that gambol on the sunny hills, is man such a sufferer? Go with Ezekiel into the "chamber of imagery"—"dig down" the wall, open the door, and look in upon the figures of iniquity that defile and disfigure the temple of the soul, and you will get a satisfactory explanation. Yes, children of sorrow and woe, if you would be reconciled to your painful lot, and feel that God is just, nay merciful in your affliction, go into the "chamber of imagery," see the enormities there, and your tone of murmuring will be exchanged for the expression—"It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed."

Secondly: *It serves to impress him with the greatness of God's love in redemption.* "God so loved the world." Often have

we heard this passage—often have we cited it. We have never fully appreciated its meaning—seldom, alas ! have some of us endeavored to do so. Would you seek to do so ? Ask yourself, On whom was this love bestowed ? Were they dutiful children, loyal subjects, or even unfortunate creatures ? Had it been so, the love would have been great, transcendently great. But open the “chamber of imagery,” and look in and see their character. See the prostitution of the soul to the most atrocious abominations, see it giving its affections and worship, which belong to God, to the meanest creatures of His hand ; and thus you will be in a position to estimate, in some humble measure, His love. “God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” If you would see the glorious stars in the day-time, you must descend into some dark pit and look up, and you will behold the firmament brilliant with innumerable orbs ; and if you would behold the wonderfulness of God’s love you must descend into the dark chamber of the world’s corrupt heart, and looking up you will see it with overwhelming glory.

Thirdly : *It serves to impress him with the sublime mission of Christianity.* What is the specific work of Christianity ? It is not merely to polish the outward manners of men, or even to discipline the intellect ; but to go into the very “chambers of the Temple,” and remove all that is wrong therefrom. It is said of Jesus, when on earth, that “He went into the Temple, at Jerusalem, and cast out them that bought and sold ;” and, with a holy indignation, said—“It is written my house shall be called the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves.” This was but an illustration of what His system has to do in the temple of the human soul. It is to go into its most secret chambers, tear down every idol god, carry in the ark, and enthrone the shekinah, and consecrate the soul a Temple for the Holy Ghost to dwell in.

Has Christianity done this for you, my friends ? Are the deities of pleasure, and wealth, and pride, and fashion,

before which you once bowed, and to which you directed your sympathies, energies and time, put down, and are you filled with the Spirit of God? Is the true God the centre of all your ideas, the resting point of all your emotions, the master end of your life? If not, Christianity has not realized its mission in you.

V. THAT THE MOST HIDDEN SINS ARE DESTINED TO BE EXPOSED. The All-knowing Intelligence knew where this chamber was, and directed the prophet to it. He did not require the door to be opened in order to see what was going on. "The darkness and the light are both alike to Him." However anxious men may be to conceal their sins, and however skilful the means they employ, "God will find them out." He is in every place—His eyes, "like a flame of fire," light up every avenue. "Whither shall I go from thy presence?" &c.

There are certain ways in which hidden sins are exposed, even now. *There is temptation.* A man lives for awhile amidst circumstances where there is little to seduce him from the path of virtue. In that sphere he is considered by all as being most upright and good. His circumstances change—temptations assail him; he has no noble principle within; he readily yields—the door is opened, and the polluted imagery appears. The virtue of some men is but vice sleeping, for the want of something to call it out. Peter, no doubt, was thought to be a man of very strong faith, and he thought himself so, until temptation came, and then he showed the infidelity of his heart. *There is affliction.* One man is thought a model of patience, his temper is never ruffled, there is always a beautiful equanimity about him; but his circumstances change, trials thicken upon him. And now what a change, how restless—how impatient! Another is very benevolent; in comparative poverty he gives his mite readily, and often says if he had so much property how delighted he would be to lay it out in the cause of benevolence: Providence places

him in the position,—and the man is a miser. *There is moral conviction.* When this seizes the soul, all the concealing walls are broken down, and the moral character leaps into light. Job, David, Zaccheus, Peter, the Publican, are examples.

There are two kinds of exposure :—

First : *Unconscious.* The character of the Jewish people was now exposed. The eye of the prophet and the eye of God penetrated their hearts, yet they did not know it. There are eyes to which your character is open, but you are unconscious of them. There are some men, perhaps, around you who have had an insight to your hearts, who, from outer acts, have had a glimpse of your “chamber of imagery ;” and have pronounced their judgment, but you know it not. There are angels to whom your spirits are bare : and certain it is that God sees you. “Our secret sins are in the light of his countenance.” “He understandeth our thoughts afar off.”

Secondly : *Conscious.* The eye of a man has a wonderful influence upon the doer of wrong. In the prosecution of his crime let him feel the glance of another upon him, and how will it affect him ! In the judgment-day we shall *feel* all eyes upon us. The “hidden things of darkness will be brought to light,” every impure emotion, every bad thought, every wicked purpose, will quiver under the rays of Infinite intelligence. The eye of God and His universe upon a guilty soul will be an intolerable hell.

VI. THAT A PRACTICAL DISREGARD OF THE CONSTANT PRESENCE AND INSPECTION OF GOD IS AN EXPLANATION OF ALL SIN. What was the cause of all this ? “For they say,—The Lord seeth us not,” &c. The idea is, that if they realized the presence of the true God, such idolatry would not prevail.

But how will this put an end to the evil ?—

First : *Because the realizing of God's presence implies supreme love to Him.* Why is it that men are not conscious of the presence of God ? Is it because He deals



with them through an established system of secondary causes? No. Thus He deals with angels—thus He dealt with Enoch. On the other hand, the Jews, with whom He dealt miraculously, did not realize Him. Is it because men are left free,—because there is no conscious interference with the laws of their free agency? No; angels are so. Is it because there is not sufficient evidence? No; logically it is clear that if there be a God He is everywhere. Why then? *Because they do not love Him.* The being we love supremely we keep close to our hearts. Friends separated by continents, oceans, and even death, love brings near. It is not logic, but love that makes us feel the Infinite near.

Secondly: *If they love Him supremely they will have no room in their hearts for idols.* Supreme love is a soul-filling power. Where God is loved there is no room for other deities. When the sun is on the eye the stars are not.

From this subject learn—*The sphere of Christian labor.* Brother, do you wish to labor in the heathen world? If so, you need not go abroad. You need not go and fight to break down the wall of China, or the wall of any other foreign country to give you a missionary field. Break down the wall of your own country's heart and you will find a heathen world large enough for your labors. You will find the spirit of all the gods in heathendom within. The spirit of idolatry is this, *supreme devotion to wrong objects*; and it is as general and about as vile in this country as in other lands. Here you will find a pantheon. You will see the goddess of pleasure; and thoughtless thousands with a censer in hand, containing gold and silver, and what is more precious, youthful talent and heart, officiating at her shrine? You will see crimson Mars; and multitudes giving themselves to deeds of slaughter and blood; worshippers they of this horrid deity. You will see mammon high up in bold proportions and prominent forms; and the great bulk of the age giving their health, energy, heart, time, all to his service! Talk of idolatry, here it is! We are filled with false gods. All the gods of heathendom are pictured within us. And He, who shines

through the blazing vault of the sky, breathes in the winds, works in the ten thousand forces of the universe, and inspires with life, love, and gladness, all the happy spirits of Infinity, is practically disregarded. An exhibition of our country's real moral heart would, I presume, produce a far more healthful influence upon our national character and destiny than an exhibition of all the hearts that the united intellect of the world has produced. Would that some hand would take off the mask! would lift the impervious veil,—would burst open the door, and lay bare the “chamber of imagery!” This would humble our pride, make us see our peril, and urge the enquiry—“What shall I do to be saved?”

## The Genius of the Gospel.

ABLE expositions of the Gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities alluded to by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its widest truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographic, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of scriptural study, but to reveal its spiritual results.

FORTY-FIRST SECTION. Matt. xiii. 24—44.

SUBJECT :—*Wheat and Tares; or, Good and Evil.*

GOOD and evil are in this world. This is one of the distinguishing facts of its moral history. We know of no other world in the universe where they both exist together. In heaven good exists, and good alone—unmixed, ever-advancing good. In hell, evil, and evil exclusively. But on earth you have both: the tares and the wheat grow in the same soil. This parable presents us with three facts, in connexion with good and evil in this world: *their implantation, their growth, and their maturity.*

I. THE IMPLANTATION OF GOOD AND EVIL. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a man which sowed good seed in his field ; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way." Christ's interpretation of this is,—“ He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man ; the field is the world ; the good seed are the children of the kingdom ; but the tares are the children of the wicked one ; the enemy that sowed them is the devil.” Both evil and good in men are to be traced to an implantation. Neither is inbred. The seeds of evil are not constitutionally in man ; and the seeds of good, though once constitutional, have been all but entirely eradicated by sin. Wherever you find, therefore, either growing, you may be sure that the seed has been implanted by some outward agent : *i. e.* “the devil,” or “the Son of Man.” Between these two great sowers, or implanters, there are certain striking points of contrast :—

First : *The one has a right to implant, the other has not.* “The Son of Man” is the owner of the field. It is here called “his field,” and the servants recognise it as His field. “Didst not thou sow good seed in *thy* field?” All souls, with all their capacities to receive, incorporate, and to develop the good, both in theory and practice, doctrine, and duty, are His :—His by creative power and redemptive love. To unfold their resources, to bring out their faculties into the bloom and fruitfulness of virtue, is His unquestionable right, as it is His pleasure. But Satan has no right to any part of the field. He has no right to touch a susceptibility, or to influence a power. He is a moral marauder.

Secondly : *The one works clandestinely, the other openly.* “While men slept.” When the sable curtain of night veiled the world’s vision, and men, wearied with the toils of the day, lay in the refreshing arms of sleep, the devil stole in and began his work. It is only as men sleep that the agents of evil can succeed. In proportion to the dormancy of the human faculties, and the general drowsiness of the soul, evil spreads. Like some of the predatory animals, evil works in

the dark, and skulks away at the opening eye of day. The reverse of this is true in relation to the right and the true. Christianity requires all the wakefulness and activity of thinking souls.

Thirdly: *The one is inspired by enmity, the other is not.* The sower of the tares is called an "enemy." Oriental travellers inform us, that even to this day, in Judea, enmity gratifies itself in the way which is here indicated. The agriculturist who happens to have an enemy, is watched by him with a vindictive eye as he ploughs his field, in order to avail himself of the first favorable opportunity to cast into the soil some noxious seed. Christ would give us to understand that it is thus with the devil. Christ has come into the field; He has ploughed its hardened soil, and in it sown the seed of everlasting truth and right. But the enemy has watched Him, entered the field, and scattered the seeds of error and wrong. Enmity inspires the promoter of evil, but love, pure and unbounded, the promoter of good. "An enemy," says Christ, "hath done this:" as if He had said, I have not sown these tares, the wheat only I have sown. Christ is neither the author nor agent of evil.

So much for the *implantation* of these antagonistic principles; one under an agency which is unjust, clandestine, and malignant; and the other, under that which is righteous, open, and benevolent. Youth, is especially the season of this implantation. It is when the conscience is susceptible, when the emotions are warm, when the imagination is vivid, when the judgment is unfettered and free, that these principles are generally implanted. After-life is but the growth and development of what we received in our youthful days.

We have here :—

## II. THE GROWTH OF GOOD AND EVIL.

First: *Both are susceptible of growth.* Both the tares and the wheat, having been sown, germinated and grew. The soil of the heart quickened both. Though man's nature is

made for truth and right, it will grow error and wrong. It can develop a wrong abstract idea into a upas tree, which shall spread its baneful branches over empires. All the social, political, and religious institutions that curse the world, are but principles received from the devil, and grown by the human heart. Man, thou hast soil in thy heart to grow the upas, as well as the tree of life!

Secondly: *That in their growth their difference is seen.* "Then appeared the tares also." In the seed they appeared indistinguishable:—in size, shade, and shape they were much alike. But as they came out in the stalk and green blade, the difference became obvious. Frequently, wrong principles, as they stand in propositions, appear in books, or flow from the lips of eloquence, are scarcely to be distinguished from the right. But let them grow into the forms of acts, habits, and institutions, and the dissimilarity becomes obvious. You will have great difficulty in convincing the foolishly indulgent parent, who ministers more to the bodily appetites and fantastic wishes of his child than to the conscience; who instils the principles of pleasure rather than duty, that he is wrong; but let the boy or girl reach maturity, and he shall have heart-breaking proofs of his error. You may have a difficulty in convincing an atheist that his principles are bad, but let them grow and become embodied in the life of a nation, and, as in France, the enormity shall be written in blood and proclaimed in thunder. The difference between good and evil principles appears more and more as they are left to grow.

Thirdly: *That although the difference appears in the growth, a complete separation cannot be effected during growth.* "Let both grow together until the harvest." What is meant by this? Not, (1) That we are not to endeavor to root out the tares of evil from our own hearts. This is the most urgent duty of every man. Christ solemnly enjoins it. (Matt. v. 29, 30). Not, (2) The non-excommunication of the detected hypocrite from the fellowship of the godly. This is also a duty. Not, (3) The ceasing from moral efforts connected with the preaching of the Gospel and the dissemination of



truth to destroy evil in the world. This also is a duty. But it means that no effort of force and violence is to be made, in order to remove bad men from the world.

The desire of these servants seems to have been to clear the field entirely of the tares, to tear them up root and branch, and to leave nothing in the whole field but wheat; which means, perhaps, the destruction by martyrdom of all wicked men, and leaving the world entirely in the possession of the good. To this wish Christ utters an emphatic no;—"lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them." As the roots of the tares and the wheat are so intertwined in the soil that the pulling of the one would involve injury to the other; so, men in this world are so interblended by their relationship of country, family, and friendship, that the martyrdom of the bad would injure the good. The mixture of the good and bad in this world is of service. (1) It is of service to the bad—it keeps them in a position of improvement; and, (2) It is of service to the good. Holy character is strengthened and perfected by contact with palpable evil.

We have here:—

III. THE MATURITY OF GOOD AND EVIL. Here notice the period in which they shall reach maturity; the forms they shall assume in maturity; and the treatment they shall meet with in maturity.

First: *The period in which they shall reach maturity.* "The harvest is the end of the world." When will the moral principles which have been scattered over the world for ages, idolatry, superstition, infidelity and worldliness, as well as principles of an opposite and holy character, reach their full maturity? Jesus tells us—in "The end of the world." Then all principles will wave in ripeness and invite the scythe of heaven. What ends are involved in this "end of the world!" The end of all human enterprises:—commerce, politics, arts and professions will be no more. The means of moral discipline will find an end in this end; no more churches built,

or sermons preached, or books written, or pardons granted, or sinners reformed, or souls sanctified and saved:—"the harvest is the end of the world."

Secondly: *The forms they shall assume in maturity.* What forms shall these principles assume in the last day? Will they appear in books, speeches, or institutions? No! All will appear in two classes of mankind; "The children of the kingdom, and the children of the wicked one:" the former, those who are born of incorruptible seed, and the latter, of the principles of evil. In that day all principles both good and evil will have passed from books, from talk, from memory, from theories, INTO MAN. On the great day of judgment you will look on the left hand and see in the horrid faces, expressions and characters of the lost, all the evil principles that have ever been at work in this world during all the ages that are past, incarnated, and embodied in "The children of the wicked one." And on the right hand of the judge you will see a living embodiment of all the good principles that have ever operated in this earth in "The children of the kingdom."

Thirdly: *The treatment they shall meet with in maturity.* "The Son of Man shall send forth his angels," &c. Observe, (1) The treatment of the evil. "He will bind them in bundles to burn them." This may convey the idea that the wicked will not be conveyed to misery in one great indiscriminate mass, but there will be a classification: they will be grouped together on some principle; perhaps, according to their ages, their countries, their associations and their relative amount of guilt. "To burn them!"—Hell is a tremendous reality. Observe, (2) The treatment of the good. "They shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of their father." It is a mercy to live in a good kingdom, but a greater mercy to live in a father's care; to have a father on the throne, to obey a father's laws, exult in a father's victories, adore a father's majesty.

The good "shall shine as the sun" in this kingdom. How pure the sun! his beams are undefiled by all the pol-

lutions of this polluted earth ; the good shall be "without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." How useful the sun ! he lights distant worlds with his beams, he is the life of the system. The good shall serve God and His universe day and night. How glorious is the sun ! he stands alone in the heavens the object of universal admiration. The good shall be "made kings and priests unto God." "They shall shine for ever," saith Christ ; yes, and ever brighten as they shine. The sun has not increased in splendor, for thousands of years ; nor does it light any more worlds than it did at first ; but the good shall increase in splendor, they shall advance "from glory into glory." They shall brighten their lustre, widen their orbits and extend their influence through the boundless future.

Friend, our subject is pre-eminently practical. The principles that are now implanted in thy bosom will grow, and one day reach maturity, and in that maturity thou wilt find thy heaven or thy hell. Nothing so momentous as principles. As sure as August shows the work of the farmer, so sure thy futurity will show the principles thou art cultivating now. "Buy" then "the truth ;" buy it at any cost ; for any amount of labor, sacrifice, or talent, buy it, and when thou hast it, "sell it not !" No, sell it not for pleasure, for prosperity, for fame or for life. Get holy principles and thou shalt get the pinions of an angel, which shall bear thee above all the clouds and storms of earth, into the sunshine and the calm of eternity.

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# Gems of Thought.

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SUBJECT:—*Summer.*

“Thou hast made Summer.”—Psalm lxxiv. 17.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Ninety-fourth.

NATURE is God's Book of Illustrations to the Bible. Both works are therefore inseparably connected, inasmuch as the one helps us to understand the other, and both are intended to promote the Christian education of man. The intelligent study of the creations of nature, leads the mind to a better knowledge of the attributes of the Divine character, because His wisdom, and power, and goodness are expressed in the order, regularity, and beneficence of the seasons of the year,—the preservation and maintenance of animal and vegetable life, as well as in the living communications of His enduring Word. And in order to convey to the mind, vivid and distinct ideas of the attributes of Jehovah, it is evident that the illustrations with which the universe abounds are great aids thereto, because abstract terms in general convey vague and indefinite notions to the mind, whereas concrete illustrations enlighten and instruct. This was the method which the Great Teacher adopted when on earth; and it is the one which is most in accordance with the constitution of man, and the best adapted for the communication of truth.

The diversified and sublime phenomena of the world are to us what the miracles of the Old and New Testament were to the ancient Jews,—manifestations of the power, severity, and goodness of the Divine character. But the commonness of the miracles of nature, takes away from their marvellous interest, as the continued enjoyment of the light of day diminishes our appreciation of its usefulness. The season of Summer,

which it is our privilege at present to enjoy, may be regarded as the manhood of the year. The painter can neither paint, nor the poet describe,—the Summer. And when the attempt is made to express the emotions which arise in the heart when observing its landscapes or listening to its melodies, it is in general of a painful nature, and we at once are conscious of the inadequacy of language to do so. The poet, however, who is endowed with a more delicate sensibility, creative imagination and lively perception, although he cannot describe the Summer, yet it is given to him to be the interpreter of the beauty which is displayed, as far as he is able; and it is in proportion to the accuracy with which he describes the scenes of nature, and his own emotions, that his writings become endeared to us. Hence the freshness and immortality of the poetry of the Bible, as well as the uninspired descriptions of more recent poets.

The perpetual succession of objects which meet our view at present in the country,—the waving trees, the blooming shrubs, the daisied meadow, the orchards in blossom; the hedges white with hawthorn; the sequestered sunny water-pools with their worlds of insect life; the hay-fields with their rural fragrance, and animation of labor; the snow-white sheep, the dappled kine, reposing under the cool shadow of the trees, and the cheerful light of the sun over all, give rise to pleasing and instructive trains of thought, which create an ever-growing sympathy for the material forms of nature. We unconsciously identify ourselves with the objects which rivet our attention and excite our imagination, until we seem to expand with the tree, blossom in the flower, soar with the lark, and cherish a reverential regard for whatever is beautiful, harmonious, and sublime.

Immediate knowledge, however, will not, in all probability, result from our intercourse with nature; for, it is after these scenes of picturesque beauty have disappeared and been forgotten, and we engage in meditation, that illustrations occur which enable us to exhibit our thoughts in new aspects; and



it is then that we feel our indebtedness to our solitary communion with nature.\*

Truth, like seed in the earth, dies in the mind, but springs into life at a future period. And an early sympathy with the Bible of nature, increases our reverence for the Book of Truth;—for the one is the counterpart of the other, as the night is of the day.

Summer illustrates :—

#### I. SOME ASPECTS OF THE DIVINE CHARACTER.

First: *It displays God's love of beauty.* When this earth assumed its present form by His creative word, He pronounced it "very good." And as physical beauty is everywhere manifested, it is evident that He delights in it. Every season which comes round renews the primeval loveliness of Eden, and man may still listen, like Adam, to the voice of God; and behold a fresh representation of His love, in His quickening into life the numberless objects which appear, with their different shades of color, variety of motion, and elegance of form,—and in the manner in which all these conduce to our comfort and delight. Man is, however, apt to forget when admiring nature, that God created the beauty of the lily of the field, the leaves of the tree, the green of the

\* "These beauteous forms  
Through a long absence, have not been to me  
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:  
But oft, in lonely rooms, and mid the din  
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them  
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,  
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;  
And passing even into my purer mind,  
With tranquil restoration; feelings too  
Of unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps,  
As have no slight or trivial influence  
On that best portion of a good man's life,  
The little, nameless, unremembered, acts  
Of kindness and of love."

WORDSWORTH.

earth, the delicate fern, the "busy bee," the melodious bird, and the fragile ephemera of an hour, and to rest satisfied with the observation of these objects, without ever rising to the creative mind which produced them. But as Milton is always associated with "Paradise Lost;" Bacon with the "Novum Organum;" Raphael with his "Transfiguration;" and Christopher Wren with St. Paul's Cathedral;—so in like manner ought the Divine Creator of beauty to be always suggested by His works, which are visible in every returning season over the whole earth, and which surpass in excellence the choicest specimens of human genius which adorn our magnificent galleries of art, as the brilliant light of the sun exceeds that of the moon—or, as the epic and lyric poetry of the Bible, transcends those of man. And if it be deemed a great offence, when speaking of a human work of art, to omit to render a tribute of praise to the artist, it is a much greater error to overlook "the Orderer, the Geometer, and the Supreme Artist," whose mind is the source of all beauty,\* when delighted, astonished, and instructed by His unrivalled works. "And if he is the greatest artist," as Ruskin has observed, "who has embodied in the sum of his works the greatest number of the greatest ideas;"—how great is God, who has manifested in His works all the ideas which man endeavors to convey by means of painting! The forms of beauty, which are at present to be seen, are reflected back on our feelings, and originate the emotions of the beautiful, which are perennial sources of delight. Beauty exists in the mind; it is therefore permanent, not transient—immutable, not changeable; for the objects which excite emotions of joy in our minds, originated similar emotions in the minds of the patriarch of Uz, and the Poet-King of Israel. But if beauty

\* God is par-excellence, the beautiful,—for what object satisfies more all our faculties, our reason, our imagination, our heart? He offers to reason the highest idea, beyond which it has nothing more to seek; to imagination the most ravishing contemplation; to the heart a sovereign object of love.—Lectures on "The True, the Beautiful, and the Good." By M. V. COUSIN. p. 167.

is regarded as existing *only* in the form, man will be apt to overlook the moral truth which it embodies, and hence lose the knowledge and exaltation of mind which are derivable therefrom.\* And the truth is impressed on our minds, that the capacity by which we appreciate and delight in beauty, is the gift of God, and that this gift is conferred on all, and is as susceptible of growth as the seed which is cast into the ground.

“ ’Tis born with all: the love of nature’s works  
Is an ingredient in the compound man,  
Infused at the creation of the kind.  
And though the Almighty Maker has throughout  
Discriminated each from each, by strokes  
And touches of His hand, with so much art  
Diversified, that two were never found  
Twins at all points—yet this obtains in all,  
That all discern a beauty in these works;  
And all can taste them.”

COWPER’S Task Book, IV. Bk.

Secondly: *God’s wonderful wisdom.* (1) The simplicity of the agencies which produce such a variety of results—creating the beautiful, picturesque, and the sublime—sustaining life—increasing happiness, and producing expansion of soul. The sun rises and sets—the rain comes down from heaven, the wind blows, the dew appears, and the

\* Ideas of beauty are among the noblest which can be presented to the human mind, invariably exalting and purifying according to their degree; and it would appear that we are intended by the Deity to be constantly under their influence; because there is not one single object in nature which is not capable of conveying them, and which to the rightly-perceiving mind, does not present an incalculably greater number of beautiful than deformed parts; there being in fact, scarcely anything in pure, undiseased nature like positive deformity, but only degrees of beauty or such slight and rare points of permitted contrast as may render all around them more valuable by their opposition, spots of blackness in creation, to make its color felt.—RUSKIN’S *Modern Painters*. Vol. I., p. 33.

fields bloom, the green corn shoots up, the trees flourish, the flowers scent the breeze, and the fruits of the earth hasten to maturity. Every natural object is fulfilling its purpose in the economy of nature, and they are all adapted to promote the comfort of man. (2) The permanent maintenance of these agencies. It is maintained by some men that matter originated its own laws; others hold, that God appointed laws, and having set the world in motion, withdrew Himself into the solitude of His own thoughts, and contemplation of His own perfections. These views are, however, opposed to experience and truth. As a deserted house soon crumbles into dust, and a lifeless body rapidly decays, and a kingdom whose laws are not enforced, loses its eminence; so, it appears to us, that the withdrawal of the sustaining and regulating power of God, would soon be manifested in the destruction of the universe. Matter decays, but its decay is the beginning of a new life under a different form. And from the general experience of man it is known, that there has been no intermission in the appearance of the seasons since Adam was placed in Paradise, and there are still no signs of decay. Earth still wears the freshness of Eden, wherever there are the perceiving eye and the sympathizing heart. And is not the truth felt by us, that the mind of God is unchangeable towards man, although His final purposes are not yet completed?

The sun which Joshua commanded to stand still upon Gibeon, and the moon in the Valley of Ajalon, still shine in the sky; and Orion, Arcturus, and the Pleiades, which engaged the attention of Job, still gleam over our heads. The lily blooms in our gardens, the homely sparrow chirps in our fields, the vine yields its increase, the husbandman scatters his seed in the prepared furrows, the valleys are covered with flocks, the rain falls, snow comes out of the north—all things continue as they were; showing forth to man the watchful care of Omnipotence, and the endurability of His thoughts. As we study the manifestations of wisdom which abound in this season of the year—the liberal provision made

for the sustenance of life, the order of the processes of nature, and their adaptability to the intellect of man,—we cannot help using the appropriate language of David, “O Lord, how manifold are thy works ! in wisdom hast thou made them all : the earth is full of thy riches.”

Thirdly : *God's infinite benevolence.* As wisdom is the highest form of intelligence, it may represent the mind of God : benevolence being the highest form of love, may manifest the heart of God. The munificence of beauty which is displayed in Summer represents this benevolence, inasmuch as:—(1) It is given to all to enjoy. Every part of the country shows forth its beauty. Some places, no doubt, excel others ; but as in the positions of human life, every advantage has its corresponding drawback. (2) This beauty is appreciable by all. There are many who, like Charles Lamb, prefer the smoke of the city to the fresh air of the country, and who pass heedlessly by the fairest forms which appear ; but they, as it were, oppose the natural love of beauty which is born in every mind. This love, however, exists in different degrees in the minds of men, and when it becomes a ruling passion, it leads to the study of art ;—and we have poets and painters, who express their love of nature in painting and in song, by which our delight is increased and our experience interpreted. (3) The labors of man in Summer are carried on to a beneficent end. The husbandman having sown the Spring seed, and the gardener set in order his garden, can look with complacency on the progress of their labors, and note the changes which take place. They have, however, no influence over the agencies which bring the fruits of the earth to maturity ; for these are regulated by the laws which God has appointed. Hence the dependence of earth on heaven.

As Spring is a representation of the tender mercy of God, Summer, it appears to us, is an illustration of His love, as manifested in the salvation provided for the human race. As man, when observing the processes of Summer, cannot express the emotions of gratitude which arise in his heart, so



neither when contemplating the sacrifice of Christ, can he adequately utter his thanksgivings. And as the landscapes of Summer belong to no man, but are free to all to admire or neglect, so salvation is the gift of God, which man may either accept or spurn.

Summer is the season of enjoyment. Men flock to nature at this period, because they feel the need of its healing influences. There is everything to attract the eye, charm the ear, and kindle delight in the heart, in the secluded rural village, or at the sea-side, or under the shadow of the lofty mountains. The enlivening sights and sounds of nature strengthen the body, and in all these things we recognise a beneficent adaptation for the good of man, showing forth divine love. And as Summer is so attractive to man, when enfeebled in health, and where he finds abundant satisfaction ; so to the bruised soul, there is nothing which is more attractive than the love which God has manifested in Christ Jesus. The highest kind of human enjoyment is only experienced when the soul is reconciled to its Creator, and it is only when the peace which results therefrom is felt, that every object in nature becomes more attractive and instructive.

Summer illustrates :—

## II. SOME ASPECTS OF HUMAN LIFE.

First : *The imperceptible progress of the Spring into Summer is a representation of the gradual advance of the mind in knowledge.* The trembling uncertainty of the youth of the year has passed into the staidness of manhood, but no human eye saw when the one passed into the other. So it is with the mind, which is as unconscious of its growth, as it is in sleep of the progress of time. The development of life is manifested to us by thought and action, as the succession of flowers and the leafing of trees tell us of the advance of the season.

There are, however, periods in nature when heavy rains succeed a protracted heat, when, in the country you almost see the wheat and corn growing ; and there are in like

manner, seasons in the history of the inner life when a vast change takes place in our states of mind, which reveals our past ignorance by the new knowledge which has dawned upon us. The unconscious influences of nature, intercourse with men, and books, which are always operating more or less upon the mind, have, perhaps, the most power in the formation of character. But it is only the thoughtful who perceive their good or evil tendencies.

Notice, further, that the rapid growth which is now everywhere visible, is the result of the seed having been sown in Spring. Only barren fields would have attracted our notice, had the farmer neither ploughed nor sowed. And it is the same in the life of man. When parents neglect, both by precept and example, to sow the seeds of knowledge in the minds of their children, the effects are apparent in manhood, by ignorance and vice supplanting the places of knowledge and virtue; and their evil actions contaminate the minds of others, as the breathing of impure air destroys the health.

It is also to be observed that as Spring passes into Summer the signs of vigorous life which the fields present, are liable to be destroyed, either from continued want of sunshine, or by excessive cold; but as the season advances the agencies which develop vegetable life become more powerful and thus augments its strength, which will better enable it to resist any injurious effects which it may sustain. So it is with the mind. When the seeds of moral truth, which have been implanted in youth, begin to manifest themselves in correct thoughts, pure feelings and good actions, great effort should be used to keep the youthful mind under those moral influences which will strengthen these hopeful signs of promise, that right thoughts may continue to result in noble actions, and thereby become habits of the soul in the manhood of life.

As there is more danger in nature when the Spring is passing into Summer, so the critical period of life is that which intervenes between youth and manhood. Examples are of frequent occurrence of buds of moral promise having

been blighted and destroyed, by the evil influences which they came under, when they commenced life for themselves and were free from parental control and advice. Moral sensibilities, without Christian principles, are unable to resist temptation. The attention of ministers, of parents, and of guardians ought therefore to be directed to the training and care of the young during the most dangerous period of life, when their future weal or foe trembles in the balance. A few months under adverse influences in early manhood have often destroyed years of Christian instruction, as the severe frost of a morning has blighted the buds which would have opened out into leaves in Summer and protected the fruit in Autumn. As in Summer, the fruit trees, wheat fields, and flowers are always exposed to the influences of the sunshine, the rain and the dew, so, in order that the soul may prosper, it ought to come daily into communion with the Source of Life, that the dew of the Holy Spirit may refresh and strengthen it to resist the temptations to which it may be subjected. As the leaves of the trees pine and fade when there has been a lengthened want of sunshine, so the soul droops and loses its vigor when it withdraws itself from the light of the divine favor.

There is a progressive development of life during the Summer. But besides this, other forms of life appear, which were not adapted to the season of Spring. And so it is in the manhood of existence that new capacities of activity are developed, which the person was unconscious of in youth. These originate fresh sources of enjoyment and increase responsibility. The analogy, however, between Summer and life is not in all respects similar. There is this difference to be noted. The soil of the ground, like youth, is passive, and in both, the future depends on the influences which have operated on them. In life, however, it is when manhood dawns, that responsibility begins. The person then acts for himself, and either builds his character for eternity or time. If he has been instructed in the wisdom which cometh down from above, and acts in accordance therewith, the blessing of

God will accompany him through life and preserve him from the sins and sorrows which an opposite course would bring, as surely as darkness follows sunset. Whenever man abandons the principles of Christianity, he becomes the creature of circumstances. The soil in Summer cannot alter its growth, but man possesses freedom of action. A further difference to be noted in this analogy is, that the growth of Summer seed is to produce fruit in Autumn for the supply of man's physical wants, but the development of moral principles in manhood satisfies man's spiritual requirements, and is also intended to bear fruit, in a Christian example, communication of thought, and right actions. Man's works live after him. The thoughts of a vigorous thinker, embodied in a book, is as Milton has observed in his "Areopagitica," "the precious life-blood of a master-spirit embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life." And the actions of Christians, like Howard, have stimulated many minds to deeds of moral heroism.

Secondly : *The gladness of Summer is an emblem of the temporal prosperity of man.* In nature, the birds warble in every glade, the bee hums in every breeze, the flower blooms on every meadow, and "the forests clap their hands with joy." Every object wears a look of gladness. We walk arm-linked with beauty, and our heart over-runs with joy as a fountain with water. So it is in the world. When all things are prosperous and our worldly store is increased, friends visit us, attendants flatter us, the hollow world fawns upon us—we grow big with importance without ever thinking that while we are enjoying our prosperity, it is passing from us. Let our riches vanish and our condition be reversed, then our Summer friends forsake us, as the bee deserts the flower when its bloom is faded, and the birds leave the groves when the leaves are withered. Nature, like the world, has its Summer friends. But it is good for man that prosperity, like the Summer, does not always continue.

As our knowledge increases, so does our ignorance. This is one of the truths which the operations of Summer teach

us. Life is only known by its manifestations, but we know nothing of its essence. Everything observable during this season tells us of our ignorance but invites us to know more. The dew, the heat, the light, and the green grass on which we walk, are surrounded with mystery. And if this is a characteristic of every natural object, are not the changes which take place in our own souls mysterious? Is not our own life a mystery—a marvel? What need there is of humility! “Here we see through a glass darkly.”

Thirdly: *The luxuriance and loveliness of the Summer is an emblem of the progress of the soul in the divine life.* There was as violent a struggle in nature between Winter and Spring, as there was in the soul between sin and holiness; but the latter gained the victory, and it expands with life under the influences of the Holy Spirit and the Son of Righteousness, as the fields and woods under the heat of the sun. And as the life of nature depends on the bounty of God, so does the life of the soul. And as the scenes of nature excite our admiration and love, souls consecrated to His service in the dawn of manhood will kindle emotions of gratitude in our hearts too deep for utterance.

Every object in this fertile season is suggestive of thought. The light—“God is light and in him is no darkness at all.” The flowers—“Man is like the flower of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is not.” The trees—“The godly man shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season.” The dew and the rain—“My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass.” Is not nature God’s Book of Illustrations to the Bible?

The moral education which is derivable from the study of the Summer, when it is regarded as a revelation of the character of God, and as illustrative of human life, refreshes the intellect, animates the heart, and awakens the latent feelings of benevolence and sympathy. “And when this education is carried on in youth, it is to lay the foundation,”



as Alison has observed, "of an early and of a manly piety amid the magnificent system of material signs in which they reside—to give them the mighty key which can interpret them, and to make them look upon the universe which they inhabit, not as the abode only of human cares or human joys, but as the temple of the living God, in which praise is due and where service is to be performed."

From this subject we learn:—

First: *God's goodness to man.* How various are the ways in which it is displayed during this season! (1) The warm sunshine, the fresh air, the lengthened day—the supreme loveliness of nature invigorate the health of man; he therefore resorts to the country at this season as if by natural instinct. (2) The habits of plants, the wonders of insect life, the marvels of the architecture of birds, the varieties of color, the progress of vegetation, afford sufficient scope for the exercise of the intellect in tracing the laws by which all things are governed, sustained, and propagated. (3) The spiritual instruction which these studies convey to the thoughtful mind—of life and of God. But the goodness which is displayed is like its author—Infinite, and therefore cannot be described.

Secondly: *The gratitude which we owe to God.* It has been said by Hazlitt "that man is the only animal who laughs and weeps." With as much truth it may be said, that he is the only animal who shows ingratitude. He owes most and pays least—he is ever receiving but gives seldom. But, in order to see his debt, it is necessary that he reflect thereon; and if this duty is done, it is soon made manifest that it is as impossible for him to sum up the mercies of which God is the source, and he the receiver, as it is to count the leaves of the forest, or tell the number of the stars. We condemn the Hebrews when we read of their ingratitude, and yet we imitate their conduct. When the manna first fell, and they saw abundance of food on the bare face of the desert, gratitude heaved in every heart, and the bounty of God was acknowledged by all. How short a time elapsed till this gratitude

was turned into apathy and indifference; and they began to look upon the manna in much the same light as we look upon the dews of the evening, or crops in harvest,—as something regular and customary, the denial of which might justify complaint, but the bestowal of which was not calculated to call forth thankfulness! . . . . Does it not appear as if it were the very frequency of the gift, and the regularity of its coming, which lead mankind to forget the Giver? It is as if a gift were left every morning at our door, and we were at length to imagine that it came alone without being sent. It is as if the widow, whose barrel of meal and cruse of oil were blessed by the prophet, had come at length to imagine that there was nothing supernatural in the transaction, just because “the barrel of meal did not waste, and the cruse of oil did not fail.”\*

May the contemplation of the goodness of God lead us to accept of His offers of mercy,—the best way in which we can show our gratitude to Him!

D. M. W.

*Glasgow.*

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SUBJECT:—*God's Glory in Christ.*

“For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”—2 Cor. iv. 6.

*Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Ninety-fifth.*

IN order to the perception of God's material creation, two things are indispensable—the presence of *light* and the possession of an *eye* as the perceiving power or medium. So, in order to the knowledge of the highest spiritual truth concerning God and His universe, there must be a revelation—light must “shine out of darkness;” and there must be

\* McCosh's Method of the Divine Government.—3rd Ed. p. 142,

an appropriate organ or state of the soul adapted to the light. "Spiritual things" are "spiritually discerned." The sun-like eye alone perceives the sun—the God-like heart alone sees God.

But this is only part of the truth of the text, The reference is not merely to the *receiving* but also to the *imparting* of light. The general idea relates to the dignity, qualification, and design, of the apostolic ministry; (see preceding verses and ch. iii.) "We preach not ourselves, but Christ;"—for if we appear to be the speakers, it is nevertheless Christ, who works by us, and who inwardly enlightens us, in order that we should enlighten others. The God who said, "light shall shine forth out of darkness," is He who has caused His light to shine in our hearts for an "enlightening (*πρὸς φωτισμὸν*) [of others] in the knowledge," &c.\* I do not suppose that the qualification here referred to relates chiefly, if at all, to the special inspiration given to the apostles; but to that general enlightenment imparted in the conversion of the soul, and ever-increased by communion with God, in which every Christian participates. Nor need we confine the design of such enlightenment to the apostles or ministers of the Gospel. Every Christian is to be a "light-giver (*φωστήρ*) in the world."

Our subject then, is—The *Revealing, Receiving, and Reflecting*, the glory of God in Christ.

Observe:—

I. THAT THE GLORY OF GOD IS MOST CLEARLY AND FULLY REVEALED IN THE FACE OF CHRIST. The glory of God in the out-shining of the divine nature and attributes. Wonderful gleams of which appear in the heavens, earth, and human soul; and in the revelations of the olden time. Still the cry of the heart was, "I beseech thee show me thy glory." "Show us the Father and it sufficeth us." This Christ came to do. Other great purposes were to be accomplished by the incarnation, but none greater than this; that thereby

\* See also Olshausen in loco.

the clearest, fullest, yea an altogether peculiar, manifestation of God might be made to "every creature." "The pillar and ground of the truth, and without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh." But let us further enquire wherein the peculiar character of this great revelation consists—how distinguished from all others, and more than all other adapted to the wants of man.

First: *In Jesus Christ we behold the most real and direct, in fact the only real and direct, expression of God.* The Infinite in the finite—the incomprehensible glory brought down, softened, adapted to man's capacity. In the revelations of God in nature we have the *indirect*—in the ancient modes of revelation the *typical* expressions of God—in Jesus Christ the direct and true. And how bewildering is the attempt to realize the thought of Essential and Infinite Divinity! The soul wants an expression—a point of repose. Jesus Christ is the "Word"—the "image of the invisible God"—the true Shekinah, (John i. 14)—"the effulgence of his glory and exact impress of his essence." "The Light."

Secondly: *In Jesus Christ we see the divine excellencies embodied in a living person.* The attributes of God, considered abstractly, have little influence compared with that exerted by their personal embodiment in Jesus Christ. True Christianity centres in the realization of this personal embodiment. Men may speak with apparent reverence of God's perfections—they may debate about creeds and dogmas in relation to the divinity of Jesus Christ, and yet realize little of the personal expression of God in Him, in the view of which alone man is thoroughly Christianized.

Thirdly: *In Jesus Christ we behold the expression of the divine perfections in their human form.* Perfections, which considered in themselves, absolutely, we are in danger of regarding as something entirely distinct from any features of character that man could exhibit; and thus from their very glory and exaltation, as beyond our imitation and affection. In Christ Jesus we see holiness, not merely in conjunction with infinite power and incapable of being tempted, but in

human circumstances, contending with human weakness and difficulties—"and in all points tempted like unto us." And then His love—how human, tender, touching! He reveals the heart of God.

Fourthly: *In Jesus Christ we see the perfect blending of all God's attributes in beautiful harmony.* Intercepted by the falling rain, the rays of the sun form the seven colors, but it is only by their being blended together again that we see the pure white ray. In other revelations of God, you have the divided, and sometimes distorted, beam; here in the face of Jesus Christ shines the pure and perfect light. "Mercy and truth are met," &c.

II. THAT GOD GIVES A STATE OF SOUL ADAPTED TO RECEIVE AND REALIZE HIS GLORY IN THE FACE OF CHRIST. "Hath shined in our hearts." The necessity of such a preparation would at once appear if we referred to *analogy*—to *scripture*, or *fact*. Things are as the *eye* and *mind* which perceive. The preceding verse speaks of "blinded minds" to whom the Gospel is "hidden." And we know that there are myriads on whom the revealed glory has shone, but through want of a prepared soul are "lost" whilst they live.

But observe two things:—

First: *That the appropriate state of soul is specially a heart preparation.* "In our hearts." It has been justly said, "Unlike other truths which need to be *understood* in order to be *loved*, religious truths require to be loved in order to be known." This law of blessedness has been announced by Christ. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." "Whosoever *willeth* to do his will shall know the doctrine." How, indeed, can the spirit that never turns itself in earnest desire to seek God, behold "that great sight?" How can the soul, dead and buried in the sepulchre of the body, discern the Great Spirit in spirit and reality? How can the carnal mind, at enmity against God's law, perceive the beauty of holiness? or, the narrow, petrified, selfish heart realize a love which is as wide as the world, which stoops



from the highest glory to the deepest abasement, and gives itself forth unto death that others might have eternal life? God, holiness, love, are to such a heart mere names, not realities. The chief affection and purpose of the soul must be changed that their full import may be felt. The heart is the soul's eye—and it must be opened, purged, clear, to receive the light of the knowledge of Christ.

Secondly: *That such preparation is a great and divine work.* The confusion and disorder which once existed on the earth, are a faint image of the chaos in the carnal mind. No mere resolutions—no mere arguments, can accomplish the new creation in the soul. "Religious truths," says Dr. Neander, "do not grow out of logic; but pre-supposing certain spiritual tendencies and affections, they arise from immediate contact of the soul with God, from a beam of God's light, penetrating the mind that is allied to Him." Gently, and almost unconsciously, are men often led to behold the glory of God in Christ, as the eye-lids uncloseth beneath the brightening beams of morning. He, alone, who first caused "light to shine out of darkness," and every morning still pours upon us His glorious light, can give us the heart-preparation we require. But "ask, and ye shall receive."

III. THAT THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH GOD GIVES HIS LIGHT TO SOME IS THAT THEY MAY IMPART IT TO OTHERS.

First: *The fact of our having received light enables us to impart it; and the more we receive the more shall we be able to give.* Christians are designed to be mirrors of Christ—reflecting His glory. If there were no objects to reflect the daylight upon this earth, yonder sun would be a comparatively useless orb: so the "Sun of Righteousness" shines on men through the instrumentality of men.

Secondly: *This fact also renders it a most solemn duty, incumbent on all who have received the truth, to impart it to others.*

"Heaven does with us, as we with torches do;  
Not light them for ourselves: for if our virtues  
Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike  
As if we had them not."

Not merely ministers—but *all*. Better there were no ministry than that Christian men and women should suppose that by supporting it they are free from personal duty to go “to seek and save the lost.”

Finally. And should we not, too, by dwelling on the glory of God in Christ, be inspired with motives sufficiently strong to bear us through all the difficulties attending the endeavor to diffuse the truth?

B. DALE, B.A.

SUBJECT :—*God's Discipline and Man's Acquiescence.*

“Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child.”\*—Psalm cxxxi. 2.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Ninety-sixth.

IN the process of weaning there are privation and substitution, and in the transition from the one to the other there are much fretfulness, sense of loss and discontent. This is soon overcome and soon forgotten in proportion as the child is constitutionally amiable, docile, and robust. The text is a moral figure taken from this natural process; *i. e.* a figure of God's discipline and man's acquiescence.

Observe :—

### I. THE CHANGE.

First: *From moral to evangelical repose.* There is a conscious loss of innocence, a first sin in every one. This is fol-

\* These words may have been David's,—and may mean, “I am utterly innocent of any desire to get the crown before Saul die, much more of any design to *hasten* that event;”—or “I am surrounded by every luxury which wealth and station can afford, yet I seek not my satisfaction from them;”—or, “though my child is dead, Absalom is treacherous and the sword will never depart from my house, yet I meekly bow;” or they may express the feelings of chastened spirits of the godly during Israel's captivity.

lowed by other sins till the conscience grows dull and hard. This condition would be insupportable were it not relieved by the vain belief, that to regain personal innocence and righteousness needs nothing but moral resolve. "I can be contrite, virtuous and good, if I only try." Now all this illusion God's spirit dissipates, when He pours truth on the soul's moral eye. It is not light merely, but consuming fire. "I was alive without the law once, but," &c. Now comes the repose of faith: "The things that were gain unto me," &c. "I thank God through Jesus Christ my Lord," &c. Secondly: *From secular to providential trust.* Loss of property, friends, health, husband, child, parents, &c.

"Once was I as a tree  
Whose boughs did bend with fruit ; but in one night  
A storm shook down my mellow hangings, yea my leaves,  
And left me bare and blasted."

Now comes trust in Providence. "He that spared not his own Son," &c. "We know that all things work together for good," &c. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God," &c. "Casting all your care," &c. Thirdly: *From earthly to celestial life.* As we advance in years, the shadow of death falls on us, and we feel it get cold. Companions of youth are dead. Desire fails, old age is bleak. The smell of our own grave is in our nostrils. The wind of eternity blows in our face. "Sorrows of death compass us," &c. Now comes immortal hope! "Let not your heart be troubled," &c. "We know that if the earthly house," &c.

II. THE PROCESS. This is through restlessness, tears, and fears, like the condition of the child in the process of weaning. (1) There is in each change the felt loss of a good. One of the *good*, though not one of the *perfect*, gifts of God. (2) The substitution of a yet *untried* good. (3) The breaking up of ease and indulgence. We instinctively shrink from toil, and ah! how the rest of our conscience, intellect, hope, peace, are all torn up by the roots! The soul

is tempest driven ;—no sun nor star for a long time appeareth.

III. THE ACQUIESCENCE. There are reasons which rebuke all this restlessness, weeping and fear. (1) The one aliment is by nature only temporary, the other for ever. (2) The identity of the love which presides equally over each condition. You do not lose your mother when you lose the breast. (3) The *special* solicitude which this transition from the one to the other awakens. (4) She loses a luxury greater than the babe does when she weans it. (5) The parental pain and distress which every cry inflicts. O that scream, that convulsive writhe, how it rends the mother's heart ! "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them," &c. (6) The oblivious ingratitude which these cries, &c. indicate. She gave me life and has hitherto given me the breast. (7) The subsequent wisdom which these cries ignore. You have reason while the babe has not. (8) The folly of all discontent which progressive manhood brings with it. Whoever cries to go back again from Christ to self ?—from God's providence to man's ?—from supernal felicities to earthly toys ? (9) The new tastes and satisfactions which the process elicits. (10) The fact that we must pass through this transition ; and our only choice is whether we will live unto or perish in it. "Thou fool, this night," &c. "The earth and all therein shall be burned up," &c. None can enter the new heavens and the new earth that have not been thus weaned from this. "They have washed their robes and made them white," &c. (11) The complacency which a retrospect of this acquiescence will afford.

W. WHEELER.

*Stroud.*

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SUBJECT:—*The One Thing Dreadful.*

“It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”—  
Heb. x. 31.

## Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Ninety-seventh.

A WONDERFULLY suggestive expression is the phrase, “The living God !” When we speak of living men, it is in opposition to dead men ; and when God is represented in Scripture as “the living God,” it is in opposition to the gods of heathen idolatry. What are idols? Dust. They have no life ; but God has life—an infinite fulness of life. There are, at least, two things which distinguish the life of God from the life of all other living objects. (1) *God’s life was not given to him.* All other life is a gift. He has life *in Himself.* His life is underived, independent, absolute. (2) *God’s life has no beginning.* We subscribe to the dictum that *every effect must have a cause* ; but we deny that *every being must have a cause.* There is one uncaused Being, and that Being we know by the name—“God !” Once there was no universe. Was there ever a period when there was no God? Never. God has existed from eternity, and there never will come a time when the atheistic utterance will be true—“There is no God.” As God did not begin to live, so He will not cease to live. He is “the living God !” And what is meant by “*falling into the hands* of the living God ?” The hand is the seat and symbol of power, so that to fall into the hands of a man is just to fall into his power ; and to fall into the hands of God is to fall into His power for punishment. This is clear from the fact that the apostle pronounces it “a *fearful thing* to fall into the hands of the living God.” This brings us to inquire—Wherein consists the fearfulness of falling into the hands of God ?

To this enquiry we reply :—

First : *Not in the vindictiveness of God.* Although in the preceding verse we have a quotation from Deuteronomy, which runs thus—“Vengeance belongs to me, I will recom-



pense ;" it must not be imagined that God is of a revengeful temper. The term "vengeance," when affirmed of God, must be taken in the sense of "penal retribution." "*Penal retribution* belongs to me, I will recompense," *i. e.* I shall punish in the execution of justice. Besides, revenge is defined "the desire of returning an injury." Unless then, God can really be injured, and we cannot conceive of it, the condition of vindictiveness is absent in His case, and ever must be. We grant that God has threatened to inflict punishment on sinners, but the infliction of punishment is no proof of vindictiveness. Is it vindictiveness that leads a parent to chastise his child ?

Secondly : *Not in any inclination in God to over-punish.* The person who is under the influence of vindictive feeling is apt to outrage justice when he meets with the object of his revenge. Indeed, it has often happened that avengers have visited the objects of their vengeance with an undeserved amount of punishment ; and were God of a vindictive spirit, it is quite conceivable that He might over-punish. Since He is not, we need not fear that He will treat *cruelly* those who fall into His hands. In His dealings with them, He will be guided by this principle of justice ; for He loves righteousness, and is by nature averse to its opposite.

Having shown wherein this fearfulness of falling into the hands of God does *not* consist, it next devolves on us to show wherein it *does* consist.

And we remark :—

I. THAT THE HANDS OF GOD ARE ALMIGHTY. Earthly kings are no stronger, physically, than their subjects. Viewed apart from the forces at their command, What are they ? —mere mortals. But God is infinitely stronger than His subjects. What is the combined strength of all God's subjects, and they may be numerous as the rays of the sun, to the strength of God ? Less far than a particle of dust is to the solid globe. One man can do many things ; men in combination can do a vastly greater number of things. The

things, however, which men cannot do exceed numerically the things which they can do. Is there anything to which God is unequal? We do not suppose that the divine power is *perfectly* expressed in creation; but do not the stupendous masses with which the loneliness of space has been invaded impress us with the *greatness* of the Creator's power? The countless worlds that roll in splendor and silence above us may not teach that God is omnipotent. They certainly *justify faith in His omnipotence*, and what cannot omnipotence accomplish? Were the entire universe of rational existences to unite with the intention of overthrowing Deity, would the "I AM" experience difficulty in defeating them? We trow not. God is a stranger to fear. A word, and the universe would instantaneously be as though it never had been. What God has made, He can easily unmake. Great—unspeakably, inconceivably great is the power of God; and hence it must be a fearful thing to fall into His hands.

II. THAT THE EXISTENCE OF GOD IS ETERNALLY LIVING. Man's punishment of his fellow may be limited in two ways.

First: *The party undergoing punishment may die.* If the slave-holder applies the lash too freely to the back of his slave, what is the consequence. Body and soul part.

Secondly: *The party inflicting the punishment may die.* It is only during life that man can afflict his fellow. The dead can neither be tortured, nor torture. Have not individuals again and again heard with joy of the death of their tormentors? Is it not well for the drunkard's wife that *livingness* is not predicable of her intemperate husband, so far at all events as the marriage union is concerned? Assuredly; but livingness is an attribute of God, and, therefore, it is a fearful thing to fall into His hands. It does not necessarily follow from God's livingness, or indestructible vitality, that man will live for ever.

Nor does it necessarily follow that God will punish for ever. But the Bible tells us that man is immortal. It further tells us that the punishment of the incorrigibly wicked

will be everlasting ; and there is nothing on the part of God to hinder it,—for He is the *living God*.

Now, if falling into the hands of God be a thing to be dreaded—yea, “the one thing dreadful,” as religion is “the one thing needful,” What ought we to do ? Manifestly, we should *keep out of His hands* :—and how can we manage this momentous business ? Christians can, by guarding against the crime of apostacy ; and sinners, by reliance on the merits of Christ’s mediation. On unbelievers alone is God disposed to lay His hands, and fling them into perdition. Haste, then, O unsaved reader, to Jesus. The hands of God are *nearing* you, and you are not safe, until the arms of the world’s Redeemer embrace you.

*Belfast.*

G. C.

SUBJECT:—*Man in Relation to the Bounties of Nature.*

“We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.”—1 Tim. vi. 7.

*Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Ninety-eight.*

THE text does not refer (1) *To mental constitution*. Every man brings certain brain-power into the world, which is to be developed and applied by education and circumstances. Nor (2) *To moral disposition*. Every man is born with a heart opposed to the law of Eternal rectitude. The text refers solely to the bounties of nature. So far as these are concerned, we brought nothing to the cradle and shall carry nothing to the coffin. The text teaches:—

I. THAT NO MAN HAS ANY ANTECEDENT CLAIM ON THE BOUNTIES OF NATURE. The child of the pauper and the child of the prince come into the world *personally* on equal terms. Yet there *must* be SOCIAL DISTINCTIONS. These will arise—First: *Through difference of force of character*. Some men could make the *wilderness* bring forth fruit, while others

would famish amid the luxury of an Eden. Secondly : *Through diversity of disposition.* The open-hearted man will be his own executor :—he scatters as he goes : whereas the covetous man piles his property that he may boast of his wealth. The text teaches :—

II. THAT NO MAN CAN RISE TO ABSOLUTE PROPRIETORSHIP OF THE BOUNTIES OF NATURE. The mightiest monarch cannot touch an atom as *absolutely* HIS OWN. He did not bring it into the world and he cannot carry it out. Amid the clamor of contending monarchs,—amid the din of battle for empire,—one voice is heard asserting the true proprietorship of the universe :—“ *The gold and the silver ARE MINE, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.*” (1) Man is not the proprietor, he is merely a *steward*. (2) Stewardship implies *responsibility*. What a new conception of life is imparted by the thought that *what we have is only borrowed* ! The text teaches :—

III. THAT MAN SHOULD CONSULT THE ABSOLUTE OWNER IN THE DISPOSAL OF THE BOUNTIES OF NATURE. There *must be* an Owner. It is most evident, however, that *man* is not the owner, forasmuch as he “brought nothing into the world, and it is certain that he can carry nothing out.” The Divine Being is the Owner, and He, as such, ought to be consulted in the distribution of His own property. First : *This is reasonable.* Is it reasonable that your servants should dispose of your property without consulting you ? “How much more then,” &c. Secondly : *This is profitable.* Does not God know *best* how property should be employed ? Can He not reveal the best mode of investment ? The text teaches :—

IV. THAT MAN MUST EVENTUALLY DISSOLVE HIS CONNECTION WITH THE BOUNTIES OF NATURE. First : *This is inspiring to the Christian.* He has been employing the world merely as so much scaffolding ;—he is only too glad, there-

fore, to take it down and enter into the temple of purity and rest. Secondly : *This is heart-crushing to the sinner.* When he parts with the world, he parts with his ALL ! Having surrendered “ things seen and temporal,” he stands in God’s universe as a penniless pauper ! Though we can carry no secular possessions out of this scene of being, there is one thing we *must* take with us, viz., MORAL CHARACTER. We cannot get rid of *that* even in the “ dark valley of the shadow of death ;”—*that* will accompany us into the presence of the Dread Judge ! Having passed the present life—having known its sorrows and joys, and been disciplined by all its mutations—having been brought into contact with the glorious truths of Christianity—having heard the Gospel in all its fulness and power, it is impossible but that these influences should have produced some effect on our moral nature. What is that effect ? Suppose it should be the “ savour of death unto death,” then there are three enquiries which God may institute :—(1) If you have not honored Me in yonder world, what guarantee is there that you would honor Me in heaven ? (2) If you have not honored My SON, what guarantee is there that you would honor ME ? (3) If you have morally wasted one world, what guarantee is there that you would not waste another ? In hearing these enquiries the sinner must be smitten with confusion and dumbness. On a review of the whole subject, three duties appear plain :—

First : *To enjoy the bounties of Providence.* The Great Father intended His children to find joy in nature ; and the true heaven-born child *will* delight himself according to the dictates of a regenerate heart.

Secondly : *To distribute the bounties of Providence.* There is but little joy in self-appropriation. *Giving* is a means of grace. Have you seen the widow’s eye when you have ministered to her need ? No artist can reproduce the divine light that shines there !

Thirdly : *To be grateful for the bounties of nature.* A life of gratitude is a life of happiness ! If you would be truly grateful ever look to those who have *less* of this world’s



goods than you have; a survey of the *palace* may induce discontentment, but a glance at the *workhouse* may awaken purest thankfulness!

My friend, what are you *living for*? What is the supreme OBJECT of your being? Are you not convinced of the folly of expending your energies on the transitory pleasures of the present life? Is there ought in mere material property to meet the requirements of your immortality? Let me charge you to seek the "true riches." Apart from *Christ* there is nothing satisfying! "HE IS ALL IN ALL." You need *pardon*, He can grant it. You are seeking *peace*, He can bestow it. I adjure you to seek Him with all your heart! Having found *Christ* you have found a universe of blessing. You will part with this world, as a faded leaf, that you may enter on an unwithering and incorruptible inheritance.

JOSEPH PARKER.

*Manchester.*

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SUBJECT:—*The Inexhaustible Energy of God.*

"The Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary."—Isaiah xl. 28.

Analysis of Homily the Two Hundred and Ninety-ninth.

POWER is a quality which few, if any, can satisfactorily define, but which all, to some extent, understand and feel. Men, for the most part, covet power as their chief good. When its love rises to a passion men grow into despots. All created existences have some measure of power. But God is power—He is the force of all forces, cause of all causes,—the all-originating, all-sustaining, and all-directing energy. All power is in mind; and its operation depends upon the volition. God's will is Almightyness.

The subject to which I invite your attention is, *the inexhaustibleness of the divine energy.*

The power of God is exerted in two distinct realms, or spheres;—the sphere of *contrivance*, and the sphere of

*execution*; and in each sphere we shall find His energy inexhaustible.

I. HIS ENERGY IN THE SPHERE OF CONTRIVANCE IS INEXHAUSTIBLE. His operations here may be called the operations of intellectual force, and they refer to two distinct departments of existence—the *material* and the *spiritual*.

First: *Look at His contrivance in relation to matter.* All men are impressed with the tremendous amount of material force everywhere displayed in the creation. The rushing currents, the surging sea, the furious tempest, the revolution of planets, and the recurrence of the seasons—all give us the impression of power. As we mark the objects and operations of nature, we exclaim,—How great must that power have been to have dug a dwelling place for oceans, to pile up the Andes, to mould the myriad orbs of the firmament, and propel, sustain, and direct them in their ethereal spheres.

But to the thoughtful, the *intellectual* force is as clearly developed in nature as the material, nay, is implied in the material. When you walk under the majestic dome of St. Paul's, are you not impressed as much with the intellectual force of the architect as with the physical force of the builder? You see physical force in bringing those masses of stone, marble, iron, timber, and other materials together, working them into shape, and adjusting them in the right place. But do you not see immense intellectual power in the architectural plan of such a stupendous edifice? It is so in nature. Science shows that everything, the minute and the vast, the proximate and the remote, is formed, sustained, and directed according to plan? David said, "In thy book all my members were written." In relation to every insect and every blade you may say so. Now, this intellectual power of divine contrivance in the material world is *inexhaustible*. Think of the boundless variety. Amongst all the flowers and trees that have ever grown, from the dawn of creation to this hour, have there ever

been two alike? Amongst all the men of all the generations that are gone have there been two in figure and face exactly alike? Amongst the countless orbs that course their way through infinite space, are there two, in all respects, alike? There are ever new devices. Oceans of new things are coming into existence every moment, but each individual is formed on a plan in some aspects new.

Here is intellectual fertility! The little intellectual force of contrivance, possessed by the bee or the swallow, is very soon exhausted. Man, too, soon reaches a culminating point in inventive skill. In machinery, and some other few things, this age has advanced upon its predecessors; but in architecture, music, painting, we are, I trow, rather behind the past, than otherwise. Humanity seems to have exhausted its contriving energy. But not so with God. What existences, worlds, and systems in archetype, are in His infinite intellect now, and will take form in the ages that are to come!

Secondly: *Look at His contrivance in relation to spirit.* Observe, (1) The unceasing creation of new spirits. Who can number the myriad spiritual beings that populate the moral empire of God? They are all different. Every fresh soul is a new creation. There is no proof that a *new* atom has been created since the world began. But each soul is *new*. It has never been in the universe—never in existence, before. The earth is old, the sea is old, the heavens are old, *but souls are ever new*. The thousand million souls now on earth, had no existence a hundred years ago, and let another century pass, and a larger number still of fresh souls will be here. Now, all these souls are different;—they differ in the measure of their faculties or the intensity and depth of their feeling. A new soul involves something of a new plan. Observe, (2) The government of spirits. The universe of spirits is everlastingly increasing, and so are the differences. Yet He controls them all: suits His discipline to each. Observe, (3) The moral restoration of human spirits. What contrivance is here! Here is “The manifold

wisdom of God." A plan this, *for saving the rebel and yet honoring the government,—destroying the sin and yet saving the sinner.*

II. HIS ENERGY IN THE SPHERE OF EXECUTION IS INEXHAUSTIBLE. His power of working out His plans is equal to His power of invention.

First: *It is so in the material.* In the material realm God seems to develop His plans in two ways—*directly* and *indirectly*—without means and by means. He creates without means. "He spake and it was done:"—by a word! Then, through means, He gives objects such affinities and antipathies, attractions and repulsions, that they so act and re-act on each other as to work out His plan. There is nothing like exhaustion of power in the material world. The heavens are as bright, the earth as green, the waters as abundant and active to-day, as ever. God's executive capability is equal to His contriving power. We can contrive more than we can execute; our brain teems with plans that will never take form. But God's infinite intellect is full of plans that will be wrought out. Worlds and systems in embryo are in His infinite intellect.

Secondly: *It is so in the spiritual.* The power which God puts forth to *create* souls, is the same as that which He puts forth to create matter; but the power to control, govern, and save, is different.

Let us for a moment look at His power in the last department—to *save*. He has contrived a plan to renovate and save mankind,—to put down all evil. But how? What is the power? It is the power of truth. The Gospel is the power of God.

What is moral power? It is the power of truth. All truth is powerful. God has established such a connexion between the soul and truth, that when truth is discovered it is received as a resistless conviction. But the Gospel is the most powerful of any truth. Why? (1) Because it is *moral* truth.

There is some truth that has only to do with the intellect : this has to do with the conscience and the heart. (2) Because it is *remedial* truth. Men feel that they are *guilty, depraved, dying*, and the Gospel meets their felt condition. (3) Because it is *divinely embodied* truth. Example is stronger than precept. The example of a child is powerful, that of a man, more, that of an angel, more,—that of God most of all. This is moral omnipotence ; and this is the Gospel. There is an inexhaustibleness in this energy. What infinite depths of undeveloped moral energy—energy to move and mould souls are in Him ! “He is able to save to the uttermost.”

The truths to be deduced from the whole are:—

First: *That the delay of punishment must not be referred to incapacity.* In the prophecy of Nahum you have these words—“The Lord is slow to anger,” &c. (i. 3.) The idea of the prophet may be thus paraphrased: We are disposed to think that because God delays punishment He lacks power—because year after year rolls on, the thunderbolt does not fall, and nothing but blessings descend, there is the lack of power. This is not the case ; He is “of *great* power.” He has “his way in the whirlwind.” You have seen the whirlwind levelling mansions with the dust, uprooting forests, lashing the ocean into fury, shaking all nature with terror. “The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind.” Nay, it is not because He wants power, but because He *has* power that you are not punished. It is because His power can afford to bear your insults and provocations;—it is because His power holds back His justice. The weaker a man or nation, the more hasty in punishing the offender. The strong only can bear insults with calmness.

Secondly: *That the urging of difficulties against the fulfilment of divine promises is an absurdity.* There are two classes of promises against which we urge this. (1) One relates to the conversion of the world. (2) The other to the resurrection of the dead. Is there anything but falsehood, unkindness, and injustice too hard for the Lord ? It is not only *possible* for these promises to be fulfilled, but



impossible for them not to be. It is not impossible for God to create other worlds, but it is impossible for Him to swerve from His word. "Heaven and earth shall pass away," &c.

Thirdly: *That if we are immortal we shall witness new manifestations of divine power for ever.* I believe that we shall live for ever; we shall be young and hale when the sun shall have grown dim with age and nature has sunk in years. What shall we see? Who can tell the *capacities* of God?

We have seen power slumbering—power slumbering in the gunpowder—power slumbering in the acorn—power slumbering in the volcano—power slumbering in the child; but what power is there yet slumbering in God! Habakkuk saw power like "horns," i. e. *beams of light* going forth from Him; and he adds, that these effulgences of energy rather veiled than revealed His infinite might. They were "The hiding of his power." What God has done in the infinite past, has only been as the rays that have gone out from the sun. The sun is as full of light to-day as ever.

Fourthly: *That the interest as well as duty of every man is to cultivate friendship with God.* You are safe if you have "God as a refuge." What said Christ? "I give unto my sheep," &c. But "the wicked," &c.—Hast thou an arm like God? Canst thou thunder with a voice like His?

SUBJECT:—*Man's Moral Position in the Universe.*

"Who is on the Lord's side?"—Exodus xxxii. 26.

*Analysis of Homily the Three Hundredth.*

THIS is the solemn question which Moses addressed to the Children of Israel, immediately after he descended from the Mount, and discovered that they had worshipped the golden calf which Aaron had set up.

Amongst other things taught in this chapter, there are five worthy of note:—

First: *The strength of the religious instinct.* For forty days Moses had been upon the Mount, and the people had not

been visited by any palpable manifestation from the one true and living God. Their religious natures were restless. They said to Aaron, "Up, make us gods," &c. Man must have a god. If he loses the true one, he will create a false one. So strong is this instinct in human nature that, the arguments of infidelity cannot destroy it,—the darkness of heathenism cannot quench it.

Secondly: *An unrighteous compliance with a popular demand.* The people cry out for gods, and Aaron, the professed minister of the true God, panders to the popular taste. He knew that there was but one God—the true and living One, that idolatry was irrational and impious, and yet he yields to their cry. The sin of Aaron, was in ministering to the prejudices of the people; a sin, it is to be feared, too prevalent even in the Christian Church. The minister who preaches to meet the prejudices and tastes of his people, commits the same sin as Aaron did when he made the "golden calf." He who would get the thousands to listen to him has only to set up "The golden calf" of vulgar sentiment.

Thirdly: *The marvellous efficacy of prayer.* The righteous indignation of God was kindled against these idolators, and He seemed determined to destroy them; when, Moses prays, and it is said—"The Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people." I cannot explain this. The Bible teaches that "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," and gives us many instances of this; but *how* it affects God I know not. Let us grasp the fact and live accordingly.

Fourthly: *The importance of determining our true moral position in relation to God.* "Who is on the Lord's side?" Of all the questions the inquisitive nature of man is capable of raising, none more important than this, and that for the following reasons:—(1) Because there is a danger of deception upon the point. There are thousands on the side of Satan who entertain the idea that they are on the side of God, and some, perhaps, who are on the side of God who

have doubts and fears. The Scribes and Pharisees thought they were on the Lord's side ; and so did Saul when he was persecuting the Church of God. (2) Because deception on this question is fraught with immense evil. A man who is on the side of Satan, and yet fancies he is on the side of God, is in a perilous position. He is beyond the appeals addressed to the sinner, he rejects them from the idea that they are inapplicable. "He sins in the name of God," &c. (3) Because this life is the only opportunity which we have of correcting mistakes upon this question. A man if he find out that he is on the side of the devil may change his position now, and step to the other side ; but in the other world there is a great gulf fixed, and all change is impossible.

The question which we would now raise is, What are the criteria by which we can ascertain our true moral position ? In order to avoid mistake, I shall notice the *negative* and *positive* side of the question.

#### I. THE NEGATIVE SIDE.

First: *That we are not conscious of any positive dislike to God, is no evidence that we are on the Lord's side.* Few men, perhaps, however depraved, are conscious of a positive dislike to God. The reason of this is obvious, viz., the blessings which here crown man's earthly existence. Nature smiles on him and so does Providence. Were Jehovah to be crossing his plans, to be constantly breaking his purposes, blasting his hopes, then his anger would rise into consciousness. Pharaoh, perhaps, before the Mission of Moses, had no conscious hatred to God. There, on his imperial throne, he had every desire of his heart ; but when he had one purpose after another broken, he said—"Who is the Lord?" &c.

Secondly: *That pleasure in meditating on God's moral character is no evidence that we are on the Lord's side.* God has so constituted the human mind that it is bound to admire excellence in the abstract ;—to delight in "the law of God after the inner man." There is not a conscience in the

universe that does not approve of benevolence, honesty, truth. "The consciences of hell are with God," &c.

Thirdly : *Unexceptionableness in the fulfilment of our social religious duties.* A man may have a high reputation in the world for honesty and honor ; he may be lauded too, for the regularity and decency with which he attends to religious ordinances, and yet not be on the Lord's side. The young man in the Gospel is a case in point.

Fourthly : *That an interest in the services of the sanctuary is not in itself conclusive evidence that we are on the Lord's side.* An individual may take a lively interest in the services of God's house ; the psalmody, the discourse, the prayers, and yet not be on the Lord's side. The fact is there is a natural love in the human soul for excitement, and so long as the services of the house of the Lord can minister to this excitement, even an irreligious man may feel an interest in them. "Herod heard John gladly."

Fifthly : *That contrition for sin is not in itself a proof that we are on the Lord's side.* Few sinners, perhaps, can be found who have not at times had some deep compunctions of soul. Agrippa, Felix, &c.

Sixthly : *Strong desires for heaven are in themselves no proof that we are on the Lord's side.* It is natural to desire happiness. All the trials and toils of life tend to heighten this desire. Preach rest to the weary, health to the diseased, plenty to the poor, and will you not awaken their desires ? There is no virtue in desiring Heaven.

Seventhly : *That zeal in propagating our religious views is in itself no proof that we are on the Lord's side.* It is natural for a man who has an opinion to desire to propagate it. The Hindoo, the Mussulman, the Mormonite,—all wish their opinions to spread. The Pharisees compass sea and land to spread their views, &c.

Eighthly : *That success in our endeavors to propagate our religious opinions is in itself no evidence that we are on the Lord's side.* It would seem that an individual may be useful, in a spiritual sense, to others, and yet be destitute of true

godliness. In the last day we shall hear of men who will knock at the door, saying, "Lord, Lord," &c.

Ninthly : *That the fact of being regarded by others as Christians is in itself no proof.* Judas, Philetus, were regarded as Christians.

What then is the evidence ?

II. THE POSITIVE SIDE. There is a test laid down by the apostle, (Rom. viii.) "He that hath not the spirit of Christ is none of his." But what is the spirit of Christ ?—What are the characteristics of that Spirit ? I may mention three :—

First : *The spirit of Christ was a spirit of religious supremacy.* Religion in Christ was not an occasional sentiment, or attitude, or service. It was the very soul of His soul. The heart of all His experience. God was the central thought of His intellect, the paramount object of His heart,—the one great reality of being. Everything else to Him was form and shadow. He was the life of all lives, the law of all laws—the very soul of universal being. "His meat and his drink was to do his will." In the profoundest solitude He felt that He was with Him. Worlds and systems were to Him nothing compared with the approbation of His Father. Now, he that has not this Spirit, he that makes religion a subordinate thing, has not the spirit of Christ. He that makes religion a branch thing, that is, one of the parts of human duty ;—he that makes it secondary to something higher rather than the highest end of being, the all in all is not on His side.

Secondly : *The spirit of Christ is a spirit of religious individualism.* By this, I mean, that He religiously realized His own individuality, and acted accordingly. He had His own convictions and principles and He acted them out from Himself. The sentiments of His age did not crush or check His own individuality. Although of "the people, there was none with him," He still pursued His way. "He trod the wine-press alone." He was not deterred by what others



thought or felt. It was His to be faithful to His own soul, and to the Eternal Father. Now, he that hath not this *religious individuality* is none of His. He that sells his individuality, as a priest to a church, as a soldier to a government, as a statesman, author, or preacher, to popularity, and acts from forces without, rather than from his own moral convictions, "has not the spirit of Christ," &c.

Thirdly : *The spirit of Christ is a spirit of religious philanthropy.* I say *religious* philanthropy, for there is a philanthropy that has no connexion with religion ; a mere natural sympathy with the race, nothing more. Christ's love for man arose from His love for God. He saw man in the light of His love for the Infinite Father and man became precious in His view. The philanthropy of Christ was not destroyed by enmity. He loved His enemies. What is the spirit of Christ in relation to enemies ? Read Matt. chap. v. Has the man who is wreaking vengeance on his enemy the spirit of Christ ? Has the spirit of Him, who, on the cross, prayed "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do ?" Has the man, who is systematically engaged in destroying men's lives, the spirit of Him, who came into the world, not to destroy men's lives, but to save them ? Has the man, who acts either from anger, from avarice, or ambition, the spirit of Him who, although "He was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich ?"

You will say, this is a severe test ; I cannot help it : it is not mine. If men are to be tried by this test, you will say, how few are Christians ! It is better to find it out now. The spirit of Christ is Christianity—the life of Christ is Christianity. He, indeed, who lives not that life, who has not that spirit, "is none of his." The question for us to ascertain is, Have we the spirit of Christ ? If not, to get it is our work—of all works the most urgent.

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SUBJECT :—*The Last Hours of an Old Saint.*

“By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff.”—Heb. xi. 21.

*Analysis of Homily the Three Hundred and First.*

THIS is a brief, simple, and touching record of the death of a man who, notwithstanding his many signal imperfections, developed virtues, entered into spiritual relationships, and enunciated predictions, which invest his biography with a race-wide and imperishable interest.

The text gives us two things :—

I. AN INTERESTING DYING POSTURE. Jacob was “leaning upon the top of his staff.” From the account which we have in Genesis, he seems to have passed through the immediate article of death on the bed. We must therefore picture him just before he lays himself on the bed for the last time, sitting down leaning on his staff with the cold hand of death upon him, and passing through its first stages. This staff had a two-fold function,—*material* and *spiritual*.

First : *The staff served to support his tottering body.* He was an old man. Time had stolen strength from his frame, he was a dying man, shivering on the dark borders of the grave, and he used the staff for his support. Few scenes are more saddening and humiliating than that of an old man doubled by the weight of years, creeping along the road or sitting by the side of a hedge, staff in hand, supporting that tottering frame in whose agility, strength, and beauty he once prided himself. Yet to such infirmity age reduces all. How touchingly are those infirmities delineated by Solomon. {Eccles. xii.)

Secondly : *The staff served to refresh his soul with delightful memories.* A staff sometimes is a helpmate to the soul, a kind of companion in solitude, giving a mute response to our lonely thoughts and aspirations: yes, more than a companion, a memorial,—a history. An old staff has the power to revive past impressions. There is a mysterious and solemn power

in the mind to invest the simplest objects with which we have been in conscious contact ;—a flower, a stone, a tree,—with an energy to wake up in our souls the remembrance of things that have past. Visit the scenes of your childhood, and almost everything about you will speak some old impression to life again. The hearth on which you played, the trees before the door, “the old arm chair,” on which a departed mother sat and pressed you to her bosom,—all have a mystic power of evoking thoughts and impressions long buried in forgetfulness. The spirits of departed impressions start to the soul in successive crowds as you tread the scenes of your young life. The “staff,” on which the patriarch now leaned his dying frame, had, we suppose, a power of this kind. It seems to have been long his companion. He bore it, probably, away from his father’s house when a boy. Perhaps it was his grandfather Abraham’s ; for with it he crossed the Jordan when a youth. It had been with him during many years of servitude. It lay, perhaps, by his side as he slept at Bethel—it was with him when he wrestled with the angel. That his memory did act now is clear from what he said, ch. xlviii. 3—7. Oh, what memories would that old staff evoke ! There is nothing unimportant to man. All that impresses him now will act on him again. We impart something of ourselves to every object with which we are brought into *conscious* contact,—something that will speak to our memories for ever—a kind of archangel’s trump to wake the buried thoughts.

II. A GLORIOUS DYING EXERCISE. He “blessed both the sons,” &c. Sometimes you see old men dying with a heart withered and dry as leather—all sensibilities gone. Sometimes with a misanthropic disgust of life,—tired of the world and sick of the race ; sometimes filled with terrible forebodings about the future. Not so with our patriarch. He “blessed” both the sons of Joseph. The exercise was two-fold, *social* and *religious*. It was *social*. He “blessed” the two sons of Joseph. It is beautiful to find this old man, with a

body trembling beneath the weight of years and the cold hand of death upon him, having his heart expanded in warm sympathies for posterity : his own personal infirmities and interest lost in the concerns of his grandchildren and his race. It was *religious*. "He worshipped." "He adored the top of his rod," says the Catholic, quoting the Douay Bible. Nonsense ! He worshipped the God whose mercy the old staff brought to memory. He remembered the God of his fathers, and felt the inspiration of gratitude, reverence, and adoration.

Jacob's dying attitude and action:—

First : *Shows that the dependence of man upon small things must increase with his years.* Jacob was now depending upon a "staff." Men labor for independence, but time makes them more and more dependent every day. Affliction, infirmities, age, cause us to feel what we are prone to forget that we are dependent not only for our comforts, but for our very existence on the smallest things,—a word of sympathy, a breath of air, a drop of water—an old "staff," &c.

Secondly : *Suggests the unextinguishableness of our spiritual instincts.* Can it be that the social instincts which were now so strong in the patriarch on the very eve of his dissolution were to go out at death ? Was he, who displayed this interest in future ages, to be quenched for ever in a few hours ? Can it be that he whose soul now went forth in the worship of the Everlasting One, was now himself to go out of being ? No, no, it cannot be. The fact that Jacob, when dying, felt this interest in others suggests to me, that he was destined for everlasting companionship. The fact that he worshipped, when dying, suggests to me that he was about entering into the immediate presence of the Ever-adorable One.

Thirdly : *Explains the philosophy of a happy death.* Such is the influence of the soul upon the body that it can by passing into certain moods destroy the consciousness of the greatest physical tortures. Hence martyrs have felt the stake a bed of roses. Let the soul be absorbed with the concerns of God and the universe, and then pain and death are

but shadows and sounds. It was thus with Paul. "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." If you would be happy in death you must go out of self! become self-oblivious—be lost in the interests of the creation, and the glory of God.

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SUBJECT :—*The Guardian of Souls.*

"Bishop of your souls."—1 Peter ii. 25.

Analysis of Homily the Three Hundred and Second.

Three facts are implied in these words :—

I. THAT MEN HAVE SOULS. How trite such an utterance! —The greatest facts in the universe are trite. First : *The fact is the most demonstrable fact to man.* (1) All the evidence that we have both for the existence of matter and mind is derived from phenomena. The *essence* of both is hidden. (2) The essence whose phenomena come most powerfully under consciousness is most demonstrated. (3) The phenomena of mind come far more powerfully under consciousness than that of matter. We are not conscious of the qualities of matter, only of the impressions which they make upon us ; but we are conscious of the phenomena of mind. Thought, feeling, volition,—we are conscious of these. Secondly : *The fact is the most important fact to man.* Consider the capacities, relations, influence, deathlessness, of a soul. Thirdly : *The fact is the most practically disbelieved fact by man.* Most men profess to believe it, but few men really do so. The popular ideas of pleasure, respectability, beauty, prosperity, glory, all of which are *material*, show, that there is no general faith in the existence of the soul. The body reigns everywhere ; its charms are everywhere recognised as supreme.

II. THAT MEN'S SOULS REQUIRE A GUARDIAN ;—an ἐπίσκοπος, an overseer. This is clear from three things. First : *From the*



*natural fallibility of souls.* No finite intelligence, however holy and exalted, can do without a guardian. Secondly : *From the fallen condition of souls.* They "have gone astray." They are "lost." Look at the mistakes they make about the chief good, worship, &c. Thirdly : *From the natural instincts of souls.* Souls through all ages have been crying out for guardians. Hence the popularity of priests and prophets, bishops and religious leaders ; hence too the readiness to follow almost any one who will profess to guide the soul. The human soul wants a guardian. It is in a shadowy maze, it wants a guide ; it is on a perilous sea, it wants a pilot.

III. THAT CHRIST IS THE ONE GUARDIAN OF HUMAN SOULS. He is *the* Bishop. What should be the qualification of him who can take care of human souls ? Perhaps there is no work in the universe so momentous and difficult as that of rightly directing and guarding souls. He that would do so should have at least four things. First : *Immense knowledge.* He should know the nature of souls, the moral situation of souls, the right way of influencing souls. He should know what they have been, what they are, what they may become. He should have :—Secondly : *Unbounded love and forbearance.* The waywardness, the insults, the rebellion of souls would soon exhaust any finite amount of love and patience. He should have :—Thirdly : *Ever-increasing charms.* Souls are to be drawn, not driven ; and nothing but the morally attractive can really and rightly draw. He should have :—Fourthly : *Inexhaustible power.* Power to extricate from present difficulties, to guard against future, and to lead on through interminable ages. Christ has all these qualifications, and No one else has.

Let Him then be my overseer. I trust no sage, nor ecclesiastic : I look to Him. "Into thine hands I commit my spirit." CHRIST IS THE BISHOP OF SOULS.

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# Literary Notices.

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

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## THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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ESSAYS AND REMAINS OF THE REV. ROBERT ALFRED VAUGHAN.  
Edited, with a Memoir, by the Rev. Robert Vaughan, D.D.  
In Two Vols. London: John W. Parker and Son, West Strand.  
1858.

WITH a melancholy pleasure we chronicle the appearance of these interesting and valuable volumes. The intellectual wealth which fills their pages reminds us of the immense loss which the world and the Church, and especially the Congregational section of it, has sustained by the early removal of this accomplished and genial scholar, poet, and divine. At the same time, the cypress intertwined with the laurel and the palm is superscribed with the glowing Christian motto,—*Non omnis morietur*. The Essays before us on Savonarola, Schleirmacher, and Origen, are learned without losing a spark of electric light and fire; and the reviews of Kingsley's *Hypatia*, of Mackay's *Religious Development in Greece*, and of Sydney Smith's *Life* are so well ballasted with profound and recondite information, that we feel there is no danger of their capsizing, gaily as they spread their light and silken sails before the zephyrs of poetic fancy and imagination. These strike us as the best articles where all are good, and would alone suffice to win for their gifted writer a prolonged intellectual existence amongst us, even if his splendid work the "Hours of the Mystics" had not already immortalized his name. The history of the mental, moral, and religious development of the mind that could produce that remarkable book cannot but be well worth the dying, and it is here presented by the only competent hand, that of his father, to whose careful and affectionate training so many of Alfred Vaughan's rare excellencies as a man, a Christian, a preacher, and a writer are clearly traceable. In the "Memoir" are inlaid fragments of autobiography—relating to the sharp conflicts of the young thinker with the sulphurous fiends of doubt—which let us into the secret of the wonderful power of sympathy with all forms of Mysticism, ancient and modern, home and

foreign, displayed by the historian of that puzzling phase of the religious life. He had, we find, himself sounded the abysses which he shows us yawning beneath our feet in the graphic pages of his literary masterpiece. We heartily thank Dr. Vaughan for these loving labors of his prolific and polished pen *In Memoriam* of one, the loss of whom is scarcely less irreparable to the churches of the denomination of which he was so bright an ornament, than it must be to himself. Our readers we trust will not do themselves the injustice of neglecting to procure the perusal of these inviting volumes.

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ZWINGLI; OR, THE RISE OF THE REFORMATION IN SWITZERLAND.

A Life of the Reformer, with some Notices of his Time and Contemporaries. By R. Christoffel, Pastor of the Reformed Church, Wintersingen, Switzerland. Translated from the German, by John Cochran, Esq. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark.

You can neither stop the clock of time, nor preserve old forms from decay. How perfect soever or venerable for antiquity, go they must. The immortal spirit that animated them once passes into other forms, which, in their turn, will perish. Such is the history of the world and of the Church, such the Will of the Presiding Mind. The sentimental antiquarian may whine, and cursing the spirit of his day, attempt conservation or restoration; but the law of progress heeds him not. Happy he who can accept the lesson of history, and live and work in harmony with the Spirit of Life! Far from the work of an individual, the great movement of the Reformation, after agitating for a long period, several separated minds, was at length manifested simultaneously in various countries. Wycliffe, who died in England in 1384, and Zwingli, who was born a century later in Switzerland, were both independent of the great German. Zwingli, who has not received attention and veneration adequate to his merits, has peculiar claims on both. He had more learning and greater soberness than Luther, whom he surpassed likewise in purity of doctrine, and more charity, wideness, and liberality than Calvin. He at last fell on the battle-field, not fighting indeed, but, as became his calling—as field-preacher, encouraging the right side, comforting the dying. His last words were, “They may kill the body, the soul they cannot kill.”—The present biography is appropriately written by a countryman of the great man. “He has made his work, as far as the materials at his command would admit of, autobiographical;” that is, there are numerous extracts from correspondence inserted in chronological order, besides reports of conversations, discussions, and the like. The translation seems well done. Whoso desires a photogram of the great Swiss Reformer, together with a view as in a *camera* of scenes in his stirring age, should read this volume.

**GNOMON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.** By John Albert Bengel. Now first translated into English, &c. Revised and Edited by the Rev. Andrew R. Fausset, M.A. Vols. II., IV. & V. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark.

It is a most pleasing duty to record the completion of this excellent English translation of Bengel's unsurpassing Commentary on the New Testament. The reader of "The Homilist" will have fresh in his memory a recent notice of the first and third volumes, which, having spoken of the excellence of the work and the competence of the translators, leaves little now to do beyond welcoming these completing volumes, which, in every respect, appear equal to their predecessors. The second volume, which contains Luke, John, and Acts, has been translated by the Editor. The fourth volume, comprising the Epistles from Galatians to Hebrews, is translated by the Rev. James Bryce, LL.D. The fifth volume comprises the books from James to the Apocalypse, and is translated by the Rev. William Fletcher, D.D., Head Master of Wimborne Grammar School. The Editor has revised the whole, and the notes from his scholarly pen and those of his able coadjutors add to its value. We have only to offer congratulations to the Editor and the other translators, and to the publishers, on the completion of this truly great and serviceable undertaking, and heartily to repeat our advice to students to procure and constantly use this commentary. Whatever others you have not, let this, at least, be on your shelf, and always at hand for reference. "What a sad sight is it, to behold a young novice, having read a dry system in theology, and attained to some remembrance of the common objections and solutions therein, strutting as if he had already reached the very top of that lofty and sublime science, and were become the most consummate and complete Divine!—I am sick of these men."\* So are we, and we know no means that would be deadlier to the tribe than to provoke the general study of Bengel's Gnomon.

**MODERN ANGLICAN THEOLOGY:** Chapters on Coleridge, Hare, Maurice, Kingsley, and Jowett; and on the Doctrine of Sacrifice and Atonement. By the Rev. James H. Rigg. London: Alexander Heylin.

THE first title of this Book, our readers will observe, is wider than the second. It is also wider than the contents; for the book deals not with English theology in general, nor with the theology of the English Church generally, nor even with the theology of the party which is usually called "Anglican," but almost solely with that of a section of "the Broad Church." It is important to enquire what is the author's

\* Bp. Bull on "St. Paul's Thorn in the Flesh,"

standard of judgment, or, which comes to the same, what is his theological position? He appears, then, to be a Methodist, of culture somewhat above the average, and perhaps, partly on this account, to have less than the reverence usual among the members of that community for a real, live clergyman. Thus he speaks of the "narrow and somewhat superficial theology" of the "Evangelical" party, of their "uncritical and narrow Evangelism," of their "lacking breadth and boldness of view," and of their "consciousness of the superiority of high Churchmen to themselves in learning, eloquence, and general ability." We are not sure that Mr. Rigg would be considered as quite "sound," according to the general standard of self-styled "evangelical orthodoxy." For, not to insist on his calling "verbal inspiration" "verbal dictation," nor on his rejection of "the commercial theory of the atonement," he seems to regard (p. 99) repentance and faith as antecedents of regeneration! See Dwight. Yet he clings to the notion of "instantaneous conversion." Such then is the standard by which he tries the men on his list. He has evidently read their writings, with less of prejudice, and more of intelligent appreciation than might have been expected. The result is a very luminous and interesting, and what was intended to be, a fair exposition of the sentiments of each. Yet his penetration and comprehensiveness are unequal to his honesty. Hence the best chapters in the book, those on Archdeacon Hare, are those which were the easiest to write. We think that he is unconsciously unjust to Coleridge, whose doctrines he skims too hastily, and gives such a representation of as S. T. C. would have disowned, and whose excellencies he neglects. In his view, the angel of light, named "evangelical orthodoxy," with "great and profound divines" of the *modern* Puritan party, is opposed to a great bugbear called modern Neo-Platonism, whose Grand Vizier is—Coleridge. Everybody is lauded or condemned according to his conformity to the one or the other. Though we essentially agree with the doctrine of the concluding chapters on Sacrifice and Atonement, we do not regard them as thorough and scientific in their treatment of those extremely difficult subjects. The style of the book is generally clear, but fussy, and the manner sometimes more flippant than seemly. Yet on the whole it deserves a reading, perhaps a permanent place on the theological shelf.

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CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT JUDAISM. By the Rev. Baden Powell, M.A. F.R.S., F.R.A.S., F.G.S., &c. London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans and Roberts.

A LITTLE book will sometimes make great noise. Perhaps it had been well for truth had this never been written. Perhaps the author will live to make a sorrowful reversal of some of the sentiments. Some;



not all, for there is much which is true and good. The great error of the work is the view of the relation of the Old and New Testaments. Christianity so distinctly adopts the Old Testament, implies its historical truth, and countenances its laws, and so involves her own credit with that of the older preparatory economy, that they must stand or fall together. Either the Mosaic economy is a Divine institution or a grand imposture. If the latter, Christ and his Apostles are convicted of folly and wickedness; a conclusion from which, however consequent, the Professor would shrink. If the former, much of this volume is liable to the gravest charges. There are other things in the book of a widely different character, which needed to be said, and which might have been effectively said under other circumstances; but which now, with the indiscriminating multitude, will lose their force and be discredited by their connexion. The book will do harm by its error and by its truth. The error will be received by some by reason of the truth—the truth will be rejected by others for the sake of the error. We fear the book will be widely read by the weak—we can only commend it to the strong.

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**THE TYPES OF GENESIS.** Briefly considered as revealing the Development of Human Nature in the World, within, and without, and in the Dispensations. By Andrew Jukes. London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans and Roberts.

THE Book of Genesis, and indeed most of the Old Testament—if we rightly understand our “Plymouth brother”—is written in hieroglyphics, and Galatians iv. 22, is the Rosetta stone. The literal sense is true and good, but there is a better, or rather there are three better,—to wit: the allegoric, the moral, and the anagogic. If we read that a man slew a lion, or that a woman drew water, it means that some one else did something else in another sphere, and so on without end. For everything answers to other things innumerable; the universe is built after direct and inverted parallelism, and the highest lore is a doctrine of correspondences. However, let us hear the Angelic Doctor, Summ. Theol. I. i. 10. “God, who comprehends all things at once in His intellect, and in whose power it is, to fit not only words for significance—which even man can do—but also things, is the Author of Scripture. The sacred lore has therefore several senses under one letter;—the literal sense manifold, the spiritual threefold, to wit, allegoric, moral and anagogic.” Gregory the Great, who is quoted both by Thomas and by Mr. Jukes, says, 20 Moral, cap. 1, “Sacred Scripture surpasses all sciences in its manner of speaking; since in one and the same discourse, while it narrates a deed, it gives forth a mystery.” The same thing was believed by some of the

Fathers, as Origen, Jerome, and Augustin, and as Mr. Jukes well knows, by Swedenborg. We doubt not that it is possible—for Mr. Jukes's book is a proof of it—*after* reading the Christian doctrine in the plain words of the New Testament, to read it over again in mystery in the Old. But we doubt the utility of such deciphering, if this be all, and unless it can be shown to add to our knowledge, that is, unless the Old Testament contains something in mystery which is not literally taught in the New, and that this mystery too is explicable. If not useful, the task were too dull to be amusing. We prefer the literal sense of both Testaments. Mr. Jukes is a scholar in many departments, and has written a pious and ingenious book, and in remarkably good English, which is something in these days.

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THE ELEMENTS OF MORAL SCIENCE. By Francis Wayland, D.D.  
With Notes and Analysis, by Joseph Angus, D.D. London:  
The Religious Tract Society.

THIS is a book which Richard Baxter, in that delightful work of his, *The Christian Directory*—would, if he had known it, have placed in the list of books indispensable for “the poorest or smallest library that is tolerable.” Dr. Wayland is an American divine, and Professor of Moral Philosophy in one of the Universities. We think that his principles are thoroughly trustworthy, and therefore in harmony, as all sound philosophy must be, with revelation. Perhaps the boundary line is not drawn with sufficient distinctness between philosophy and Christian theology. We heartily commend the book to intelligent young men, and thank the noble Society that has given it to those on this side the water.

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A PLEA FOR THE WAYS OF GOD TO MAN: being an attempt to vindicate the Moral Government of the World. By William Fleming, D.D., Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.

ANOTHER book on the great problem, the dark mystery, on which revelation sheds the best light, and for which it furnishes the best solution. Professor Fleming is not a mere philosopher, but a thorough believer in the Bible. “There is no discrepancy between Reason and Scripture,” he says; and in this spirit the work is written. The subjects dealt with are—Metaphysical Evil, or, the Imperfection of the Creature; Physical Evil; Moral Evil; Moral Government, its Evidences, Measures, Extent and Efficacy; the Prosperity of the Wicked and the Adversity of the Righteous; and the Hereditary Principle in Moral Government. While we do not feel the work to be exhaustive

or complete, it yet comprises most valuable and suggestive observations, and is well worth the study both of the philosopher and Christian.

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CHRIST AND MISSIONS: OR, Facts and Principles of Evangelism. By the Rev. William Clarkson, late Missionary to India, &c. London: John Snow.

THE heart of this author is evidently warm with love to God and man; a love not consisting in evanescent excitement, not crude and fanatical, but matured, healthy, intelligent, Christlike. Would that it might prove catching! No greater blessing could be imagined than the prevalence of this love. Coldness to the great Missionary enterprise is a sure sign of defective Christianity; for Christianity is by nature expansive. It is easy to be common-place on Missions, difficult to say what has not been said a thousand times already. A thousand unmeaning decencies are iterated and reiterated, because it is fancied they must be, at every meeting and in every magazine. So it is with all great moral topics. They are simple, their principles elementary. Their unpractical profession is most distasteful, but give them a thought and they are seen to be sublime and precious. What is needed is not so much to expound them anew, as to engraft them on our souls, and make them one with our affections and our deeds. The man of business does not parade his earnestness, he needs not artificial means to keep his zeal warm; but his enduring diligence proves his earnestness to the discerning observer. A similar earnestness is required for Missions, not fussy, excitable, obtrusive—but quiet, and all the more real and strong. Such an earnestness this work is fitted, by God's blessing, to beget and foster. We heartily commend it to all who call themselves Christians.

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VILLAGE DIALOGUES. By the Rev. Rowland Hill, A.M. A new edition abridged. London: The Religious Tract Society. Lovers of genuine humor will be thankful for this reprint and judicious abridgment of the great "evangelical" humorist, whom it were superfluous to commend. While we cannot endorse all, we essentially agree and admire. Men of the present day will find much to help them here to a knowledge of that great popular movement of the recent generation, which, its faults notwithstanding, was a revival of godliness and a blessed work of the Holy Ghost, of which we are receiving the benefit, and our posterity will receive to the end of time.—THE STARS AND THE ANGELS; or, the Natural History of the Universe and its Inhabitants. London: Hamilton, Adams and Co.—"AN UNDEVOUT ASTRONOMER IS MAD;" but not every devout astronomer has perfect mental health. This work will have charms for many. The author has considerable learn-

ing and science, but less soberness than fancy. He seems to be at once a Christian and a philosopher, to revere both Nature and the Bible, which cannot contradict each other, and whose agreement he aims to demonstrate. Amongst theories somewhat extravagant, suggestions will be found which deserve attention.—A CONFIRMATION GIFT. London: Ward & Co., 27, Paternoster Row, 1858. A most suitable gift is this for those who have just past through the rite of Confirmation, and thus publicly in their own persons taken on themselves the vows which had—whether righteously or not—been made for them in baptism. Our Church friends could not do better than to circulate this work amongst this young and interesting class of the community. It is a gem of its species.—A FUNERAL SERMON occasioned by the death of the Rev. Jacob Jones. By T. E. Fuller. Melksham: J. Noyes and Sons. This sermon, besides its intrinsic merits, which are considerable, is invested with thrilling interest from the circumstance of its being occasioned by the death of a young and promising minister, who, leaving the country for a colonial post of labor, perished in the wreck of the “Catherine Adamson,” off Sidney Heads, in sight of the very scene to which his heart pointed as the chosen sphere for his future services. We have seldom read a more heart-moving discourse.—A FUNERAL SERMON on the Rev. R. Philip. By the Rev. E. M. Davies. Jackson and Walford. The subject of this discourse is one of the most interesting and significant scenes in the life of Him whose biography is the life of the world,—*i.e.* the resurrection of Lazarus. The sermon is chiefly DESCRIPTIVE. The description, however, is not that of the outside of the scene, nor that of a vulgar dramatic representation of its supposed spirit. This kind of description which is much in vogue now-a-days is in many cases a sad profanation of the Sacred Word. The author of this truly meritorious discourse penetrates to the spirit of the incident, and with chastened reverence and æsthetic skill delineates the probable mental states both of Jesus and the two sisters of Lazarus. The sketch given of the lamented Robert Philip is delicate, truthful, sincere and pathetic.—THE SUNDAY SCHOOL QUESTION BOOK AND FAMILY CATECHIST. By William Roaf. London: John Snow. We have seen many excellent little books to aid Sunday School Teachers in their holy work, but this strikes us as incomparably the best. On seventy small pages, price threepence, we have a comprehensive system of Biblical Theology—free alike from technicality and narrowness. It is condensed power, every point is electric. Every teacher of youth should have a copy, and use it.

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# A HOMILY

ON

## Principles held in Trial.

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“Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?”—Matt. xxvi. 53.

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A WORD or two about war in starting. For Christ speaks the text in denunciation of the sword. If ever violence admitted of justification it was now, when Peter in defence of his master smote off the right ear of one of the servants of the high priest. It was purely *defensive*. No instinct of avarice, ambition, or conquest prompted the apostle thus to unsheath and use the implement of violence. It was simply the instinct of preservation, and that against an attack unprovoked and malignant. A band of Roman ruffians “from the chief priests and elders of the people,” enter the garden of Gethsemane, in the stillness of the night, with swords and staves, in order to perpetrate violence on Christ and His followers. What right had they to invade those quiet and sacred precincts where Jesus was now at prayer? Had He ever injured them by word or deed? Did He not always pay the greatest deference to all the righteous claims and inalienable rights of man? The attack therefore against which Peter in defence unsheathed his sword was most unjustifiable and unprovoked. Still more. Peter’s use of the sword was not only purely defensive, but it was *generous*. It was not from personal revenge or selfish fear that he now acted, but from generous friendship. Love for his holy Master fired his breast and nerved his arm. All ideas about



self-preservation seemed lost in this heavenly passion. A case from history or even from imagination cannot be selected where the use of the sword would appear more justifiable. And yet in *this* case it is condemned. One might indeed have thought, that Jesus, whose example is the law now binding on humanity, would have commended this valiant interposition of Peter; that He would have said, "Well done brave servant, for this generous and heroic act." But the fact is otherwise. He utters an emphatic rebuke—"Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." Take this utterance as a prediction, and you will find its fulfilment in every war that figures on the page of history; take it as the enunciation of a principle, and you will find it harmonize evermore with the laws of man's social nature. Like begets like the universe through. Anger will never produce love. War will never beget peace. It may produce temporary quiescence, but never rational and lasting harmony. Still more emphatically does Christ rebuke this act of Peter: as if words were too weak to express His disapproval, He performs a significant miracle. He puts forth His benign hand and heals the wound which the sword produced, thus proclaiming that the true mission and dignity of man are to heal, not to wound; to save, not to destroy. So much for the context.

The subject to which we now invite your attention is this:—

PRINCIPLES HELD IN TRIAL. Christ was now in the midst of trial. He was in Gethsemane. It was with Him "the hour of darkness." Not outwardly so, for the queen of night and her starry sisters threw down their silvery beams and lighted up the neighborhood with their gentle brightness. The gloom—the midnight—was within. "My soul," said He, "is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death." When the soul suffers the man suffers. When a man suffers in his body it is some limb or organ that suffers, but when he suffers in his soul it is *himself*.

Now it is interesting to enquire what *principles* will bear the test of trials, and will be held with a tenacity in the most trying periods of our history. There are dogmas which men will hold with interest, and battle for with earnestness, when all things are fair and prosperous, but which will evaporate as steam in the fire of trial. Much of men's speculative theology passes off, as mists from the mountains, in the storms of sorrow. What then are the principles which can be held in trial? This question we shall answer by another. What principles did Christ hold in Gethsemane? In the text we discover at least *four*, which His great and holy nature held with all the energy of His being.

I. THAT GOD CONTINUES HIS FATHERLY CHARACTER TOWARDS THE GOOD IN TRIAL. "My Father," says Christ. With a cup of unknown anguish in His hand, with a mysterious pressure on His heart, with a midnight horror around His being, He calls Him "Father." One might have expected that in His appeals to heaven now, He would have said, "O, Righteous Sovereign! O, Almighty Creator! O, inexorable Judge!" but it was not so. "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." It is not a difficult thing for a good man to regard the Almighty as a Father when all things are propitious,—when the heavens are clear, when the earth is fruitful, when there are health in the frame, vigor in the limb, peace in the family, prosperity in the market, and buoyancy in the heart. But when these things are not, when there is the reverse of all this, when the heart is overwhelmed within us, then to say, "Father," is the difficulty. Yet Christ did this.

The principle that God retains His fatherly character towards the good in trial is not the dream of enthusiasm, not the fiction of a superstitious brain, but a well attested fact.

First: *It is a principle in harmony with reason.* God's character and relations are absolutely unalterable. Neither the sins nor virtues of His creatures can change Him. When

He ceases to appear to any of His spiritual creatures as a father, it is because they have changed, not He. While a man's conscience is at peace with God, he looks up to Him as a father, but let guilt come on that conscience, and he will invest that father with the attributes of an indignant judge. It is no fault of the sun that in November our days are gloomy and we are wrapped in dark and chilly fogs; the sun is as bright and glorious in his orbit then as ever. It is our earth that has made the change. It is so with the soul. God is as full of parental love when we feel Him to be a dark enemy, as He ever was. It is our sins that give Him this hideous aspect. They create a thunder cloud between us and the sunshine of His love. Besides, suffering is not incompatible with true fatherhood. Suffering, as it never springs from the constitution of things, but always comes out of sin, is a good to the universe. It tends to check and crush moral evil. Were sin to go on without suffering it would run riot through all spheres and ruin the creation. Reason, then, teaches that if God is ever a father to a good man, He is so in suffering.

Secondly: *The principle is in harmony with revelation.* "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." "He doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men." Such is a specimen of the teaching of the Bible on the subject.

Thirdly: *The principle is in harmony with the experience of the good.* Job retained it under all his sufferings, and he said "Though he slay me yet will I trust him." David said "Before I was afflicted I went astray." Paul said, "Our light afflictions which are but for a moment," &c. The good have ever felt afflictions to be blessings. They have been storms to purify the atmosphere of their hearts, gales to bear their barques away from scenes on which their souls were set;

curative elements in the cup of life, to eradicate disease and to brace with strength.

“Trials tune our hearts to music,  
Tribulation fits us for the skies.”

My suffering brother thou mayest then hold the fatherhood of God in the deepest of thy trials. No suffering can destroy this relationship. Destroy filial sentiment and you will destroy the very eye of the soul which discovers a father. The Prodigal Son crushed this sentiment for a time. Amidst his riotous living it had well-nigh become extinct. Whenever in his moral recklessness he thought of the man who begot and reared him, he would regard him rather as an enemy than a father. But did the father change with the change of the son's affection? No. Every day, perhaps, during the absence, parental love was in anxious search of the lost son. And how it hailed his return! “When he was a great way off the father saw and ran and kissed him.” “The mountains shall depart and the hills be removed,” says God, “but my kindness shall not depart from you.” Yes, those mountains that lie about me here\* in rugged grandeur, crowned with the majesty of centuries, the admiration and wonder of generations that are gone, whose heads have been encircled with the snows of a thousand winters, and around whose gigantic shoulders the genial springs, the gorgeous summers, and the golden autumns of unnumbered ages have, in their turn, thrown their Heaven-made mantle—those old mountains shall depart, those hills shall start from their rocky foundations, but God's kindness shall never be removed. “I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Another principle which Christ held in trial was :—

\* This discourse was preached at Llandudno, North Wales, under the shadows of mountains.

II. THAT AMIDST THE UTMOST MATERIAL DESTITUTION OF THE GOOD, THERE ARE IMMENSE INVISIBLE RESOURCES FOR THEIR RELIEF. "Twelve legions of angels." To Peter and his two companions Christ appeared, in the presence of this band, utterly defenceless. He had no visible guards about His person, no weapons in His hand;—but Jesus saw what they did not. He saw legions of spiritual existences ready to stand in His defence.

The text suggests two things in relation to this point.

First: *That the invisible is greater than the visible.* With a world of enemies about him, Peter alone seemed to be on his side. But whilst there was only one *visible* helper there were twelve legions of *invisible* ones. A legion was six thousand men in the Roman army; the numbers here therefore mean seventy-two thousand:—a definite number for an immense indefinite multitude. Christ might have said to Peter, "Thou thinkest that I am left entirely to thy protecting care, that there is no one else to stand by me. Thou art mistaken. There are immense multitudes of spiritual beings around me, invisible to thee, who are ready to act as my guard." It is always true that the invisible is greater than the visible. The visible universe is great. I stand upon some lofty summit of nature, from which I discover stretching around me immense tracts of sea and land, assuming aspects of grandeur well-nigh overwhelming, but I know that the whole of this vast area is but a spot compared to the mighty regions that lie beyond. But what is the globe itself to the visible universe?—a leaf in the forest—a sand on the ocean's shore. Yet the whole is nothing to the invisible. Could I take up a position from which I could command a view of the whole visible creation, it would be but a fraction to the invisible. The unseen will ever be the greatest. It is the *infinite*. The material universe veils more than it reveals.

Secondly: *That the invisible resources of the good are greater than the visible.* Far am I from disparaging the visible resources of the good which abound in the material world



about us. All the elements, the forces and productions of the world, are for man. Some minister to his body and some to his soul; some to his intellect, some to his imagination; some to his social, and some to his religious, sympathies. But great as are these visible resources the invisible are greater. As only one in Gethsemane appeared visibly to stand up for Christ, whilst there were millions of invisible protectors, so the good man has but few visible blessings compared with the universe of invisible supplies. Do not judge then the resources of the good man from what you see. Bereave him of his friends, reduce him to poverty, let him stand before you as a friendless homeless being, he has still infinite resources unseen; and he can sing with the old prophet,

“Although the fig tree shall not blossom,  
Neither shall fruit be in the vines,  
The labour of the olive shall fail,  
And the fields shall yield no meat,  
The flock shall be cut off from the fold,  
And there shall be no herd in the stalls,  
Yet I will rejoice in the Lord,  
I will rejoice in the God of my salvation.”

He can say with Christ, “I have meat to eat that ye know not of.” Spirits like those that rescued Lot from Sodom, guarded Daniel in the lion’s den, liberated the apostles from their dungeons, wafted Lazarus to the skies, hover about me in numbers without number. “He has given his angels charge over me, and they shall bear me up lest I dash my foot against a stone. I shall tread on the lion and the adder, the young lion and the dragon shall I trample under foot.”

Another principle which Christ held under trial was :—

III. THAT PRAYER IS THE SETTLED CONDITION BY WHICH RELIEF IS OBTAINED IN TRIAL. It is a mere question of prayer. As if Christ had said, “With one breath of prayer I can move the spiritual universe, and call its mighty legions to my aid.” There are infinite resources in the universe for the good in trial, but they are attainable only by prayer.

Prayer is the condition of relief; "Call upon me in the day of trouble and I will deliver thee."

We are aware that the idea of prayer securing deliverance for man in trial is denied and even ridiculed by the sceptic. It is said the sufferings of man come upon him as the necessary results of fixed laws; and will the petitions of frail and erring man induce the Almighty to repeal or modify His institutes?

A violent epidemic rages in the neighborhood and carries thousands to their grave. The good men of the district meet to implore the Almighty to stay its terrible course; the sceptic looks on and laughs. With a smattering of science he discourses about the inviolableness of nature's laws. He points, perhaps, to certain states of the atmosphere, to certain gases, as the cause of the fearful malady, he denounces the man as a brainless fanatic who attempts to remove these causes by prayer.

Now let us fully grant that all the sufferings and trials of men spring from natural causes, and that their removal therefore requires a removal of the causes, we can still see how prayer can be efficacious to that end. Two facts will make this obvious.

First: *The material condition of men, as well as their other conditions, depends greatly upon the state of their minds.* The physical condition of any individual man at any time is traceable to the various states of mind to which he has been subject. The ideas of life that have hitherto influenced him are to a great extent the causes of his present poverty or wealth, vigor or weakness. The difference between the physical condition of our country and other countries where epidemics and other evils prevail, is traceable to the difference of ideas that influence the respective populations. The laws of physical health, secular prosperity, social harmony and political freedom, to be obeyed must be understood, and the understanding of them depends upon the mind. Change the soil of a country and you change its productions, change the mind of a people and you change their

institutions and conditions. Let a population discover the cause of a pestilence that has raged for centuries, and the means of removing it, and its poisonous breath shall no more touch their shores.

Secondly : *That in the exercise of prayer the mind is brought within the sweep of the truest ideas of things.* There is no sphere so prolific of thought, nothing stimulates the mind to action so powerfully as the realization of the Divine presence. Prayer unseals the well-springs of thought. There are many scenes in nature which are suggestive. There are many books suggestive, but there is no power so suggestive as prayer, no scene so suggestive as the throne of grace. Ideas start of a higher type and move in a more rapid flow there than anywhere else. The mind is then in closest contact with the Eternal Intellect, the Primal Font of Thought. "The secrets of the Lord are with those that fear him, and he will show them his covenant."

Now if the physical condition of man is dependent upon his state of mind, and if his mind is thus influenced by prayer, it is not difficult to see how prayer can remove a pestilence or any other evil without the interposition of miracle. A plague may rage around me, it may spring from causes at work in nature, causes which, if I understood, I could remove, causes which the man of science has failed to discover. I pray : and in that sacred exercise I may receive an impression of the cause, and an impulse to remove it. I set to work with my new knowledge, remove the cause, the plague is ended, and all this without miracle. Or, I have a loved friend, the subject of a malady that has been pronounced incurable ; the wisest physicians have pronounced the case hopeless. Love prompts me to pray for the recovery of my friend. I rise from my knees with the impression that some other medicine should be tried, or some other practitioner consulted ; I attend to the impression ; the means succeed, my friend is recovered. All this without miracle.

Settled as is the order of this wonderful universe, regular

and uniform as are its laws, it still admits of a realm for prayer.

But why attempt a philosophic reply to the objections which sceptics urge against prayer? Could no such reply be given, with the word of God in my hand and a soul within me having instincts for prayer, I should be bound to believe in its efficacy. What wonderful examples of the power of prayer are furnished us in the history of the world! Moses stays the arm of omnipotence by prayer. Elijah seals and unseals the heavens by prayer. Abraham holds up the fiery storm over the plains of Sodom by the breath of prayer. I refer all the great epochs which have proved fountains of blessing to the world to prayer. I refer the blessings that descended on the day of Pentecost to the prayers that rose from the upper room at Jerusalem. I refer the reformation in Germany to the prayers of Luther, concerning whom Melancthon said, "Often have I found him on his knees bathed in tears of prayer before God." I refer the reformation in Scotland to the prayers of John Knox, concerning which the Queen of England said, "I dread them more than all the armies of Europe." I refer all the prosperity that has marked the history of America to the prayers of the Pilgrim Fathers; men whose birth was England's glory, whose persecution was England's shame.

Let us then believe the Great God when He says, "Ask and ye shall receive, knock and it shall be opened unto you."

Another principle held in trial which we discover in the text is:—

IV. THAT CONSIDERATIONS OF OUR OWN PERSONAL CONVENIENCE SHOULD ALWAYS BE HELD SUBORDINATE TO THOSE OF THE DIVINE WILL. It is clear from the text that Christ could have delivered Himself from His present difficulties and trials. It was only for Him to pray and the battalions of heaven would have bounded to His deliverance. Peter seemed to regard Him as a poor defenceless creature, requiring his frail arm to guard Him from the assailants.

Christ says, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more," &c. I am not, Peter the creature of necessity, here by a force over which I have no control, I require neither your pity nor defence, I have power to lay down my life and power to take it again. The poor women who burst into tears of sympathy as they beheld Christ bearing His cross to Cavalry, misunderstood His position, and Christ takes an opportunity of correcting their mistake; "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, weep for yourselves and your children." As if He had said; "Though I appreciate your tender sympathy, I require not your tears of commiseration; I am not here by coercion but by choice, I require not your pity, but your praise."

But whilst Christ could have delivered Himself from His immense perils and sufferings He did not. Why? Was it because He had a stoical nature insensible to suffering? No. He was exquisitely sensitive. Every nerve in Him quivered with feeling. It was because He held the will of God supreme. The will of God required Him to suffer. "It pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief." His own trials and sufferings in His estimation were as nothing compared to the Divine will. He would move through the deepest caverns and fiercest flames of hell to follow after the Divine will. And as He moved He would chant, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God, thy law is written in my heart."

A question here naturally arises of no mean importance. Why did the will of God require Him to suffer in the way He did from wicked men? Granted that His sufferings were necessary as an expiation for sin, why were the sufferings not inflicted some other way? If He is to be made a sacrifice, why did not God commission an angel from heaven to descend and strike the blow? Or why did He not, as in the case of Elijah's sacrifice, cause fire to descend on the sacrifice and burn it? Why were the sufferings, necessary to honor Divine justice, to be inflicted by the hands of wicked men? Why were the expiatory sufferings to be made up of the insults,



the calumnies, the persecutions, the tortures inflicted on Him by the men He came to save? There are, we think, four good reasons for this.

First : *His suffering by the hands of wicked men served to show the vastness of the evil He came to remove.* The salvation of the world is not a thing entirely accomplished *for* man. It is something to be accomplished *by* him. It consists in a victory over sin. But man to contend earnestly with sin so as to conquer it, must have a deep impression of its enormity. And how is this to be given? The fact that Christ put Himself so thoroughly in the hands of men, and that He received such treatment from them, shows this in a way in which it could never else be discovered. When I look at Christ moving amongst men, when I see the kindest being receiving the basest ingratitude, the holiest being slandered, the greatest being the object of ridicule and contempt, the son of God executed as a malefactor by the hands of wicked men, I stand appalled at the enormity of human sin. Calvary strips the human world of all its masks, uncovers it and reveals the depths of its wickedness, throws sunlight on that black and foaming ocean of sin on which human souls are borne on to ruin. Philosophers, I cannot accept the apologies which you offer for sin! Poets, I cannot appreciate the gorgeous drapery you throw over sin! Artists, I deplore the varnish and the tinsel with which, in this age of civilization, you attempt to embellish sin. In the light of Calvary I feel, notwithstanding all the appearance of virtue and refinement, that the heart of the world "is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked."

Secondly : *His allowing Himself thus to suffer and to die by the hands of wicked men served to develop the moral glories of His character.* Forbearance under insults, forgiveness of offences, invincible perseverance amidst opposition, moral heroism in the midst of enemies, these are virtues that adorn the biography of Christ. They are the most lovely flowers in the garden of this book, the brightest stars in its radiant firmament. But had He not received sufferings from enemies

they never could have been developed. Like fire from flint they only flash forth by violence ; like the sweet odours from the aromatic herb, they only come forth by the pressure of force.

Thirdly : *His allowing Himself to suffer by the hands of wicked men serves to show the universal adaptedness of his example.* All the difficulties to our piety, and temptations to sin, which we meet with in this world, come to us through man. The devil comes to us, not as he came to Adam in Eden, in some monstrous form, but in our nature. Through man he works upon us all. Now Christ faced the devil in this form. Had He not mingled with men and suffered from them, He would have been no example for us. We should have felt He did not understand our trials ;—for our trials come from men. Or had He suffered from a certain class of men, the masses might have said, He is no example for us, He does not know the trials or difficulties we meet with from the particular men with whom we are brought in contact. But as Christ lived amongst men, descended to the lower parts of the earth, met men of all classes, of all temperaments, of all dispositions, of all prejudices, of all creeds, of all trades, we can hold Him up as an example for every man. No man has ever met with a human passion that Christ did not meet with and suffer from. Are you suffering from the falsehood of a slanderer ? so did He. Are you suffering from the base insinuations of mean souls ? so did He. Are you suffering from the persecutions of arrogant bigots ? so did He. Are you suffering from the treachery of friends ? so did He. Are you suffering from the insolence of men “dressed in a little brief authority” ? so did He. In whatever form the devil appears to me my brother, he appeared to Christ. I hold Jesus up therefore to thee as an example by which to battle with the devil and overcome him.

Fourthly : *His allowing Himself thus to suffer by wicked men, serves to assure us of the complete mastery of God over all the forces and workings of human wickedness.* The wicked men of Christ's age thought to check the progress of His

doctrines, to thwart His plans, to extinguish His influence. When they heard Him cry "It is finished," when they saw Him in the grave with the large stone sealing Him there, they considered that they had fully realized their object. The Priests and the Rabbis would now expect that the public sentiment which the thoughts of Jesus had so excited and diverted from them, would now sink into its wonted monotony and roll in its old channels. But how vain was such a supposition. All the while they were only performing the Divine plan. Mere wheels were they in the machine of Providence, working out the high purposes of heaven. "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel," &c.

So much then for the reason why Christ received His sufferings from wicked men rather than *directly* from God.

Let us not, however, forget the general principle which our Saviour here realized, namely :—That considerations of our own personal convenience should always be held subordinate to those of the Divine will. What are our personal inconveniences, even the greatest conceivable of them—a very hell—compared with His WILL? What are we to the universe? What is the universe to Him? His will is the volition of Infinite love. It is LOVE purposing to bless universal being with its own exhaustless treasures. The deepest suffering of some of His creatures are but the bass notes in the ever-swelling music of His happy creation. His will is the law of laws, immutably supreme. A cordial acquiesce in it, even in personal suffering, is spiritual bliss. As the ocean follows the moon, even when the heavens frown on it, and the winds lash it with fury, so let our souls evermore follow the Divine will, even in our greatest trials. We shall then soon find ourselves gliding on the serener waters of a gentler clime—waters glowing in the sun, and disporting in the breath of Infinite LOVE.

Brothers let us, like Christ, hold these principles in trials. Whatever Providence may take from us, let us hold these with the tenacity of our being. Like stars, they will break through our darkest nights of trials and shed their soft and

cheering rays upon our hearts. How sublimely rich are the good ! How precious and unbounded their resources ! In the lowest material destitution all things are theirs.

Seas roll to waft them,  
Suns to light them, rise—  
Their footstool earth,  
Their canopy the skies.

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## The Genius of the Gospel.

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ABLE expositions of the Gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities alluded to by the inspired writers ; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its **WIDEST** truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach ; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographic, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim ; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of scriptural study, but to reveal its spiritual results.

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FORTY-SECOND SECTION.—Matt. xiii. 31—33 ; 44—52.

SUBJECT:—*Phases of Christianity.*

As there is a rich cluster of very suggestive parables in this portion of the chapter, parables giving different phases of Christianity, I shall endeavor to present a distinct and brief analysis of each. The first is :—

THE MUSTARD SEED ; OR, CHRISTIANITY A LIFE.

“The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field. Which indeed is the least,” &c. These verses give us three things in relation to Christianity.

I. THE APPARENT INSIGNIFICANCE OF ITS ORIGIN. “The least of all seeds.” This does not mean that the mustard-seed is the least of all seeds, or that when grown it becomes the greatest of all trees. This is contrary to fact. But inasmuch as the ancients specially marked, in this case, the won-

derful difference between the small grain and the full developed tree, "small as a grain of mustard seed," became a proverbial expression amongst the Jews. Its smallness was felt not by comparing it with other seed, but with the big tree which grew out of it. It is therefore a suitable figure to represent the general idea that out of small beginnings great things arise. Did ever a system come before men in such a humble aspect as Christianity? Who was the founder? The despised Gallilean.—"He was as a root out of the dry ground." Of the people there was none with him. "He was despised and rejected of men." He was born as a pauper and He died as a malefactor. The first promoters of His system who were they? None of the conventionally great or even respectable, but for the most part men of the humbler class in life. But though apparently insignificant, though the seed was small in size and mean in form, it was full of vitality,—inextinguishable vitality. An eternal series of celestial harvests slumbered in its shell. Men have always been anxious to give grand forms to things. They found their schools and inaugurate their administrations amidst the pomp of imposing ceremonies. They garb their thoughts in rhetoric and propound their laws in formulas of hazy solemnity. The reason of this is, the want of faith in the vital truth of their ideas. Truth like life will make its own form;—error only lives as it is wrapped in fine clothes. Christianity was a principle of living truth, "a seed;" and though small, only give it soil and it will build up structures for itself. The little acorn will build in oaken forests for itself a home, before which the most magnificent palaces of kings shall appear mean, and that shall flourish in strength and beauty when those palaces are dust. Truth never studies appearance, error does; truth is content with the form of a mustard seed, error seeks all the pageantry that art can invent and wealth procure.

II. THE WONDERFUL EXTENT OF ITS EXPANSION. "When it is grown it is the greatest among herbs." The propor-



tion between the little mustard seed and the full grown tree is one of the marvels of nature. There are in nature smaller seeds and bigger trees in abundance, but we are not sure whether you will find in nature a larger tree starting from a smaller seed. "When it is grown it is the greatest among herbs." Greatest in proportion to its seed—"and becometh a tree so great that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof."\* "The idea" says Olshausen, "which this parable is obviously designed to set forth is simply this—That in the manifestation of what is divine the beginning and the end of its development stand related to each other in an inverse ratio. Springing from invisible beginnings it spreads itself abroad over an all-embracing field of operations." The little seed which Jesus and His disciples sowed shall one day grow to proportions more vast than that tree which the prophet beheld in vision whose "height reached unto heaven and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth." All the other productions of the world shall be small in comparison with it. Or, to change the figure, "the little stone cut out of the mountain without hands" will roll on and grow in every revolution until it become a great mountain to fill the whole earth.

From this destined expansion of Christianity let us learn :—

\* "In hot countries, as in Judea, the mustard tree attains a size which it is never known to reach in our colder latitudes, sometimes so great as to allow a man to climb up into its branches (though this, indeed, is mentioned as a remarkable thing,) or to ride on horseback under them, as a traveller in Chili mentions that he has done. Maldonatus assures us that in Spain he has himself seen great ovens heated with its branches; he mentions further that birds are exceedingly partial to the seed, so that when it is advancing to ripeness he has often seen them lighting in very great numbers on its boughs, which however were strong enough to sustain the weight without being broken. This fact of the fondness of birds for the seeds, and the manner in which therefore they congregated in the branches was probably familiar to our Lord's hearers as well. They, too, had beheld them congregating in the branches of the trees, whose seed thus served them for meat, so that there must have been a singular fitness in the image which the parable presented to their minds."—TRENCH.

First: *Not to despise things of humble appearances and beginnings.* Our question should be, in relation to all systems and measures, not, Are their forms imposing or respectable? not, What great names stand in association with them? but Have they the vitality of truth in them? If they have, treat them with becoming homage, for they are Divine; oppose them not for they are destined to grow: they will spread out their majestic branches over your grave. "Despise not the day of small things."\*

From this destined expansion of Christianity let us learn:—

Secondly: *The duty of patient perseverance in our efforts to promote truth.* Christianity is confessedly slow in its progress;—but it does progress. It does not grow fast, but it does grow. As a general principle in life, science, and institutions, the greater the thing the slower its growth. Every kind of life, philosophic, social, and political, as well as vegetable and animal, has its mushroom and oak; the one reaching its perfection in a few hours, the other requiring the growth of long centuries. Since Christianity appeared how many systems of religion have sprung up, reached their maturity and passed away! But Christianity is growing still, its roots are deeper, its branches stretch over more territory, and are clad in richer foliage to-day, than ever. Let us then toil on: we cannot labor in vain.

III. THE NECESSARY CONDITION OF ITS EXPANSION. "Which a man put into the soil." "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

First: *There is an affinity subsisting between the human soul and the gospel, analagous to that subsisting between the earth and the seed.* The earth is invested with powers to quicken, nourish, and develop the seed. The human soul can take in the gospel and turn it into a living and regnant power. There is beautiful fitness in the gospel to the constitution and condition of the human soul. There are some systems

\* See a Characteristic Sermon of John Foster on this text.

that suit some souls in some respects but do not suit others. Christianity suits all—it is fitted to universal mind as the earth is fitted for the seed. It can grow in souls of every zone, from the equator to the poles.

Secondly: *The extension of the gospel requires that it should be committed to the soil.* “Unless,” says Christ, “it die, it will abide alone.” Christ was a sower of the seed. He sought to put the truth into human hearts. He did not commit His thoughts to books but to souls. Christianity as it works in the heart is mightier than it is when explained and enforced in a thousand volumes. Christianity in books is like seed in the granary, dry and all but dead. It is not written, but living, characters that are to convert the infidel. The life of good men and not the library of theologues is the converting power.

O, let me speak the thoughts of Christ!  
And then my words like seed shall grow  
In hearts, when I am gone:  
In nobler forms and widening spheres  
To beautify and bless, shall they appear:  
Harvests out of them shall come  
To help the millions yet to be.

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THE second phase is:—

#### LEAVEN;\* OR, CHRISTIANITY AN INFLUENCE.

“The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.” From this we learn:—

I. THAT CHRISTIANITY IS AN IMPORTED POWER. The leaven is “taken” from somewhere, and put into “the meal.” It is not an inherent element. Christianity is not a force

\* As there appeared in Vol. III. of “The Homilist,” two masterly discourses on this subject from the pen of the Rev. J. H. RYLAND, we shall merely give an outline of our thoughts.

*native* to the world. It is something brought to it and put into it. "My kingdom," said Christ, "is not of this world;" it does not rise out of the world as other kingdoms have done. It is a foreign importation. The world could not produce it, for it could not produce that which was *dissimilar* in *spirit* and *opposed* in *aim* to itself. Christianity is of Divine origin.

II. THAT CHRISTIANITY IS A HIDDEN POWER. The leaven is "hid in the meal." This is illustrated by the silent manner in which Christ entered the world, and the unostentatious way in which He passed through it. "He was in the world and the world knew him not:" by the manner in which His system works—"His kingdom cometh not with observation." Subjectively it begins working as a quiet power in the heart. Its reformatory energy begins not with outward institutions and forms, but with inner principles, and then works on gently until it reaches the extremities of the external, and fashions all to its own ideal.

III. THAT CHRISTIANITY IS AN ASSIMILATING POWER. The leaven makes the lump like itself. Christianity makes all it influences like itself. It gives men the spirit of Christ. What a glorious state will the world be in when it shall have realized its mission! Each of the millions of men on this earth Christ-like in all that is moral. If the gospel has not leavened us with its spirit it has not realized its end in our case.

IV. THAT CHRISTIANITY IS A DIFFUSIVE POWER. "Leaven leaveneth the whole lump." (1) *Gradually diffusive*. From particle to particle it moves. It works from the centre gradually to the circumference. Christians in their efforts too often overlook this order. They have transported Christianity over masses instead of working from man to man. (2) *Universally diffusive*. "The whole lump."

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THE third phase is :—

## THE TREASURE AND THE PEARL; OR, CHRISTIANITY THE HIGHEST GOOD.

“The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.” We have Christianity here in two aspects:—

I. AS A TRANSCENDENT GOOD IN ITSELF APART FROM MAN. It is here represented as a treasure and a pearl. “A pearl of great price.” Looking at it apart from man it is “a treasure,” a good in itself:—it has *intrinsic* worth. But it is “a hid” treasure—hid in the field of revelation. It is “a pearl” in the sea of Divine events. There are material treasures in those hills around us, and pearls beneath the waters that roll at our feet, sufficient, could we but obtain them, to invest us with the wealth of a Cræsus. It is so with spiritual things. There are elements of good in the Scriptures and in religious literature, and in the Church of God, which, if men could only discover and possess, would enrich and ennoble them for ever. “The unsearchable riches of Christ,” like treasures concealed by the earth, or pearls buried in the waters, are in our world; but they are unseen and unowned by the millions.

There are four criteria by which we determine the value of an object—*rarity, verdict of competent authorities, durability, usefulness*. First: *Rarity*. This makes gold more valuable than brass or iron, pearls and diamonds more valuable than ordinary stones. In this sense Christianity is valuable. It is perfectly unique. There is nothing like it. Amongst all the systems of the world there is but one Gospel—amongst all the books but one Bible. “There is no other name



given," &c. Secondly: *The verdict of competent authorities.* Whatever article in the markets of the world is pronounced valuable by men, whose judgment is considered most correct on such subjects, derives at once a value from the fact. The opinions of such authorities will invest almost any article, however intrinsically worthless, with a commercial value. Intrinsically worthless books, if praised by those who are considered judges of literature, will pass as the most precious productions of genius. Apply this to Christianity. The greatest sages, the sublimest poets, the purest saints, have all pronounced Christianity to be of incomparable value. They have felt with Paul, who said, "I count all things but loss," &c. Thirdly: *Durability.* The duration of an object often gives it value. The thing if of ephemeral existence is not esteemed of much worth. The Gospel is durable. It is the incorruptible seed. "It is the Word of God that endureth for ever." Fourthly: *Usefulness.* We value an object according to the service it is capable of rendering. Metals and plants, animals and men, are estimated by this rule. What has rendered such service to humanity as Christianity? We need not speak of its intellectual benefits, and show how it has broken the monotony of thought and set the mind of the world in action. We need not speak of its political benefits, and show how it has flashed and frowned upon injustice and tyranny, and moulded governments according to the principles of rectitude. We need not speak of its social benefits, and show how it has evoked and refined the best sympathies of our nature, given man a kindly interest in his fellow, and laid the foundation of social order and progress. We speak of its spiritual blessings. How it purifies the fountains of life, how it pacifies the guilty conscience, how it fills the soul with the sunshine of Divine love, how it raises our nature above the fear of death, and enchants it with glowing visions of an ever-expanding and brightening futurity.

Blessed Gospel! It is indeed "a pearl of great price." Take it from us, and you will freeze up the fountains of our spiritual energy and blight the springing germs of our hopes;

you will turn our landscapes into deserts, and our hemispheres into midnight. Take it from us and what are we? Frail barques struggling with the heaving billows of life, without a chart to direct us, or a star to break the darkness that enshrouds us on the surging wave.

II. AS A TRANSCENDENT GOOD IN THE PROCESS OF APPROPRIATION BY MAN. It is interesting to look upon Christianity as an infinite good in itself; but it is more interesting to look upon it as a good appropriated by ourselves. Such is the view we now pass to. The appropriation includes two things. *Discovery and joyous surrender of all for it.* First: *Discovery.* The pearl and treasure were "found." In two very different ways: one by an *apparent accident*, and the other by an *intelligent purpose*. (1) There is apparent accident in the discovery of the treasure. It is not said that the man was in search of it. Perhaps the man as he was digging, or driving his ploughshare through his land, in the process of its cultivation, turned up the treasure unexpectedly.\* This man represents those who meet with the

\* "The circumstance which supplies the groundwork of this first parable, namely, the finding of a concealed treasure, must have been of much more frequent occurrence in an insecure state of society, such as in almost all ages has been that of the East, than, happily, it can be with us. A writer on Oriental literature and customs mentions that in the East on account of the frequent changes of dynasties and the revolutions which accompany them, many rich men divide their goods into three parts; one they employ in commerce, or for their necessary support; one they turn into jewels, which, should it prove needful to fly, could be easily carried with them; a third part they bury. But while they trust no one with the place where the treasure is buried, so is the same, should they not return to the spot before their death, as good as lost to the living, until by chance a lucky peasant, while he is digging his field, lights upon it. And thus when we read in Eastern tales how a man has found a buried treasure and in a moment risen from poverty to great riches, this is, in fact, an occurrence that not unfrequently happens, and is a natural consequence of the customs of these people. Modern books of travels continually bear witness to the universal belief in the existence of such hid treasures; so that the traveller often finds great difficulty in

saving power of the Gospel at a time when they had no intention of so doing. These are the men who are found of Christ though they ask not for Him. Such was the Woman of Samaria, at Jacob's Well; such were Peter and Andrew "casting a net into the sea"; such was Nathaniel "under the fig tree." How many have been converted in a seemingly casual way! Christ has come to them in a tract, or a conversation, or a sermon, or in some other event in an unexpected manner. The inestimable treasure has been found in a most casual way—casual to the finder, but pre-arranged by heaven. (2) There is *intelligent purpose*. The merchant was engaged in "seeking goodly pearls." This man believed in the existence of "goodly pearls," he strongly desired them, and visited all the markets within his reach in quest of the same.† This represents the men who believe in a higher good than they have reached,—anxiously search for it in

obtaining information about antiquities, and is sometimes seriously inconvenienced, or even endangered, in his researches among ancient ruins, by the jealousy of the neighbouring inhabitants who fear lest he is coming to carry away concealed hoards of wealth from among them, of which, by some means or other, he has got notice. And so also the skill of an Eastern magician in great part consists in being able to detect the places where these secreted treasures will successfully be looked for. Often, too, a man abandoning the regular pursuits of industry, will devote himself to treasure seeking in the hope of growing, through some happy chance, rich of a sudden."—TRENCH.

† "This appears to indicate the antiquity of a still Oriental profession, that of a travelling jeweller, a person who deals in precious stones and pearls, and goes about seeking for opportunities of making advantageous purchases or exchanges, and taking journeys to remote countries for this purpose, and again in another direction to find the best market for the valuables he has secured. In the course of their operations it frequently happens that they meet with some rich and costly gem, for the sake of obtaining which they sell off all their existing stock, and every article of valuable property they may possess, in order to raise the purchase money. Something similar may sometimes occur in the transactions of stationary jewellers, but not so often as among those who travel; indeed the jewellers of the East, as a body, are perhaps the greatest travellers in the world."—PICTORIAL BIBLE.

science, in literature, in worship,—and at last find it a rich prize. “We have, perhaps,” says Trench, “no such a picture of a noble nature seeking for the pearl of price, and not resting till he had found it, as that which Augustine gives of himself in his ‘*Confessions* ;’ though we, also, have many more, such as Justin Martyr’s account of his own conversion, given in his dialogue with Trypho ; in which he tells how he had travelled through the whole circle of Greek Philosophy, seeking everywhere for that which would satisfy the deepest needs of his soul, and ever seeking in vain, till he found it at length in the Gospel of Christ.”

Though, however, the chief good is often found casually, no one has a right to expect it without acting as the merchant did. Nay, every man incurs guilt who acts not thus. A man must go into the field and not merely upturn its soil with the ploughshare of cursory thought, but he must dig and delve as a miner. He must not merely look into the face of the waters for a pearl, he must dive to the sandy bed on which it rests. He must prosecute an earnest quest for it. “Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding ; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures ; then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD giveth wisdom : out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous : he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.”

Secondly : *A joyous surrender of all for it.* “He selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field.” The merchant did the same and bought the pearl. The only condition on which you can obtain this transcendent good is by selling all you have ;—your preconceived notions, old habits and selfishness, pride, time, talents ;—your all. It must be regarded of more worth than all other things put together. We say a *joyous* surrender of all for it. “With joy,” &c. The purchase must be made—not mechanically, reluctantly, but joyously, with an exultant heart. “What things were gain to me,” said Paul, “I counted loss,” &c.

The fourth phase is :—

### THE NET ; OR, CHRISTIANITY A COLLECTING FORCE.

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea,” &c. The great idea here is that Christianity is a power to collect men together. The existence of Congregations and Churches throughout Christendom, from the apostolic days to these, attests its congregating force. There are two facts suggested here in relation to its collecting capability.

I. THAT IT COLLECTS TOGETHER ALL CLASSES OF MEN, GOOD AND BAD. The net is not thrown into a channel or bay, but into the wide sea. Christianity is for universal man—it is to be thrown into the vast ocean of souls, “amidst the noise of the seas, and the tumult of the people.” Thus acting upon the world, it gathers “of every kind.” Because Christianity appeals to so many impulses in the human mind men are drawn to it from improper as well as righteous considerations. First : *There is the love of excitement.* Men have a strong instinct for excitement. This is the philosophy of most of the entertainments of the age. Race-courses, dances, theatres. Christianity appeals powerfully to this. Used with a little dramatic skill and eloquence, nothing is so exciting as Christianity. Secondly : *There is the love of happiness.* “Who will show us any good ?” The heart of the world has no deeper cry than this. All are in search of enjoyment in some way or other. Christianity appeals to this deep instinct. It reveals the hell to be avoided—the heaven to be obtained. Thirdly : *There is the love of study.* The desire for knowledge and intellectual action is a strong instinct. Men are made to desire and to admire truth. Hence the tremendous propensity to believe,—the credulousness of men. Christianity appeals to this instinct. It gives a system of truth adapted to engross and charm the intellectual nature. Fourthly : *There is the love of power.* Men



naturally desire influence among their fellow men. Now, in this age, in Christendom, Christianity appeals to this instinct; for men cannot obtain much power who are in avowed hostility to it. "The offence of the Cross" has ceased long ago in this country. It is an ornament in dress, a condition of greatness, a pledge of worth. Men must use it now to get influence. Fifthly: *There is love of right.* Men are made "to delight in the law of God after the inward man." Christianity appeals to this sense.

Now these are the forces by which Christianity collects men of all classes.

The fact teaches, (1) That the moral character and primary end of Christianity are not to be judged of by the character of the men it collects into assemblies. There are good fish in the net, and there are bad ones also. There are good men in the visible church, but there are also many bad ones. On the whole, perhaps, more bad than good. "They are not all Israel who are of Israel." In the great house of the Church "there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor." Like the bad fish, some are so small as to be worthless, and others so unclean and putrid as to be offensive and injurious. You would not judge of the design and usefulness of "the net" by the bad fish, but by the good; why then judge of Christianity by the bad men, that from unworthy motives attach themselves to it? And yet men do so. There is no visible Church that gives a correct representation of Christianity. Individuals may be selected who do so, but not communities. The fact that Christianity thus congregates men, teaches, (2) The great importance of all its adherents giving themselves to self-scrutiny. It is no proof that we are good, that we have been drawn into Christianity and are held by it. The question is, *What* in Christianity has drawn us and *what* in Christianity holds us?

II. THAT THERE IS A PERIOD TO ARRIVE WHEN THE COLLECTED MULTITUDE SHALL BE SEPARATED. "When it was

full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away: so shall it be at the end of the world:" &c. First: *The separation will be deliberate.* This is indicated by the statement that "they sat down." There will be no precipitancy, none of the confusion of haste in this work. Each individual fish in the net was minutely examined to ascertain its value or worthlessness. So it will be with men at last; each will be strictly examined: every man shall "give an account for himself." Secondly: *The separation will be solemn.* (1) Think of the period in which it will take place. "The end of the world." What overwhelming descriptions does the Bible give of this period! (see 2 Peter, iii., &c.) (2) Think of the agents employed for this purpose. "The angels shall come forth." We cannot agree with those who like Olshausen regard the "angels" here as denoting the ministers of the gospel. The parable does not require such a construction, and other parts of the scripture distinctly teach that to be the work of angels in the proper sense. (Matt. xiii. 41; xxiv. 31; xxv. 31; Rev. xiv. 18, 19.) "They shall come forth:" they have seldom been visible to men, their visits have been proverbially "few and far between." But they shall COME FORTH now in broad sunlight before the open eye of an assembled universe. (3) Think of the final results of the separation. "The good gathered into vessels," but "the bad cast away." The good are taken care of, they are received "into everlasting habitations," into "a city that hath foundations," "the heavenly Jerusalem." The bad are "cast away." Thrown into "a furnace of fire." This is a figure, but a figure of a terrible something. What?—Who shall answer?

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The fifth phase is:—

#### CHRISTIANITY A SYSTEM FOR THOUGHT.

"Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord. Then said he unto

them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old."

I. CHRISTIANITY IS A SUBJECT TO BE INTELLECTUALLY UNDERSTOOD. "Have ye understood these things?" There are some who act as if Christianity could save them without their understanding it. Such are, First, the *sacramentalists*, who fancy that saving grace is mystically communicated through the sacraments. Such are, Secondly, the *sentimentalists*, men who come to the house of God not to understand but to feel; who never think of being taught—never wish it. The titillation of the sensibilities is all they look for. Such are, Thirdly, the *fatalists*, who expect to be converted in some miraculous way in God's own time. That Christianity is to be understood is evident from four things. (1) It has a written revelation. (2) It has an interpreting ministry. (3) It can rightly influence men only as it is understood. (4) It inculcates the duty of study.

II. THAT THE BETTER MEN UNDERSTAND CHRISTIANITY THE MORE QUALIFIED THEY ARE TO MINISTER IT. "Every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." Three remarks will bring out the spirit of this passage. First: *That the function of a true minister is to provide for the spiritual wants of his people.* He is a "householder." We do not agree with those who, like Neander, regard the work of the householder here as consisting in showing "his visitors his jewels, exhibiting in pleasing alternation the modern and the antique, and leading them from the common to the rare." We are disposed to think that his work is of a more useful description, namely, spreading on his table various articles of food for his family agreeable to their diversified tastes and wants. The work of the minister is to spread out before his people

the provisions of the gospel. Secondly: *That the provisions which he presents should be characterized by variety.* "Things new and old." "Things," says Henry, "of this year's growth and last year's gathering." Man wants variety for his body, and God in nature hath provided for it; man wants variety for his soul, and God in Christianity has provided for it. There are truths here for every grade of intellectual power, every phase of spiritual experience, every stage of religious growth;—for the child, the young man, and the father. The rustic and the sage may study together here. Thirdly: *That an increasing acquaintance with the things of Christ will qualify the minister to furnish this variety.* Christ's words are *seeds* of thought. When a man begins to treat Christianity in a devoutly philosophic way he will discover on every page truths of such suggestive force as will be perpetually opening his mind to new and nobler views. One true thought, in the very nature of mind, is the fountain of myriads. If preachers were truly thoughtful, the pulpit would never be monotonous; it would be a perennial source of life and beauty. From what source can truths so fresh and vigorous be obtained as from the Scriptures!

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## G e r m s   o f   T h o u g h t .

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SUBJECT:—*Divine Providence.*

"The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord."—Proverbs xvi. 33.

Analysis of Homily the Three Hundred and Third.

IN this striking proverb we are taught the doctrine of Divine Providence. The general doctrine of Providence derives support from sources independent of Divine revelation. But we would more particularly refer you to the testimony which the inspired volume brings to this subject.

Providence is another term for the government of God, by which all events are made to concur with His wise and holy purposes. This includes both the visible and invisible worlds,—angels, devils, men, and all irrational creatures.

Look at Providence :—

### I. IN THE MODE OF ITS OPERATIONS.

The agency of God is seldom *direct*—He commonly works otherwise, even in things purely spiritual and where the result is so manifestly His own. He uses means to produce it:—"Paul planted and Apollos watered, but God giveth the increase." Thus it is in temporal things: instruments are employed, and instrumentality requires agency; for however keen the sword or excellent the pen, the one cannot wound or the other write without a hand to use it. His agency, though obvious enough in its results, is imperceptible in its working. Thus it is with the wind; we cannot see it pass, but trace the direction of its progress in its effects. God seldom makes use of the marvellous, or acts so as to alter the regular and established order of things. His agency sometimes, indeed, resembles a torrent which sweeps over a universal surface;—as it rolls and roars along, it fills us with amazement and dismay. But He more commonly brings His purposes to pass in a manner more slow, tranquil and unobserved; resembling the flow of a river that keeps its own channel. Look at Providence :—

### II. IN THE VASTNESS OF ITS RANGE.

His superintendence, care, and control, extend to all His creatures. As there can be nothing too great for God's power to control, so there can be nothing too little for His condescension to notice. The archangel on high and the worm on earth are objects of His regard. He works every moment in every part of our world;—moves every atom, expands every leaf, erects every tree, breathes in every wind, thunders in every storm, empties the volcano, heaves the ocean and shakes the globe: every motion of inanimate and



animate creation must be known and directed by Him. The very elements of nature operate by His appointment. "He maketh a decree for the rain and a way for the lightning of the thunder." "He causeth the sun to rise upon the evil and the good." "He giveth seed-time and harvest, summer and winter and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with joy and gladness." "He giveth the beast his food and the young ravens which cry." The Scriptures abundantly confirm the truth that there is a universal Providence. Look at those little sparrows in the field, hear them chirping in the hedge: who is it that protects them—numbers and ministers to their wants? It is God that rules on high. Not one of them shall fall to the ground without thy Father's notice. See those beautiful flowers which are in full bloom: what a rich fragrance they give to the surrounding scene! But, behold their varied and delicate colors! What a splendid drapery! They are the delight of every eye, they fill the bosom with pleasure. Who thus clothes our fields? Is it not Jehovah, our Father,—our everlasting Friend?

How interesting, however, to observe the Providence of God as it relates to man, to his circumstances and conduct. The care of Divine Providence commences with our birth, and it is especially exercised during the years of childhood. "Thou art he," said the Psalmist, "that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts." Providence appoints the station we are to occupy in society—the rank in which we move. It fixes "the bounds of our habitations," determines the degree and kind of trial which shall fall to our lot, the measure of sickness or of health which we are to experience, and decides the term of our continuance in this world;—how, when, and where, we shall die. Hence says Job, "Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass." "The way of man is not in himself";—the motion is man's, the action is man's, but the direction is from God. "It is not in man that walketh to

direct his steps." "What is casual to us," says Charnock, "is ordained by God." God never leaves second causes to struggle and act in a random way. The whole disposing of the lot which is cast into the lap is from the Lord. While ordinary history points us to the agency of man, the Bible points us to the agency of God, working all things after the counsel of His own will;—permitting, restraining, directing, and governing, all actions and events. *Here we see God in history.* To the eye of reason, what a dreadful wilderness would life appear, how gloomy the prospect, did we not believe that there is an all-powerful and all-gracious hand guarding our steps and managing the world!

Blessed assurance! "All things work together for good:" not singly, not separately, but "together." All the events which befall the real Christian are for his good; every event is so bearing its particular part in the general work, supplying what is wanting, correcting what is hurtful and aiding what is useful, to fulfil the Divine purpose. What a striking example of this truth do we find in the history of Joseph! His cruel treatment from his brethren, his servitude in Egypt, the false accusations of his mistress, his disgrace and imprisonment, were so many steps which, under the direction of Infinite wisdom, were made subservient to his future advancement. In this long chain of events had one of the links been wanting, we see not how he would have risen to that high station in the Court of Pharaoh, which enabled him afterwards to become the preserver of his family, and of the whole land of Egypt. Doubtless, on looking back at the Lord's dealings with him, he would feelingly own that "All things had worked together for good" to him. So with us, friends, all the dispensations of God towards us are designed for our present and eternal good.

Look at Providence:—

### III. IN THE PUNISHMENT OF THE WICKED.

Look at Pharaoh, who had multiplied the grievous burdens of the people of Israel. See the number of his plagues—

his cruel edict. See the river of blood and the death of the first-born. Israel departs from Egypt—she is in great straits, and “sore afraid;” but, “Israel cried unto the Lord.” Man’s extremity is God’s opportunity. Pharaoh supposed that Israel was now in difficulties. “Let us be up and after them,” he cries. He pursued—“God was hiding His power.” So he goes forth, he and all his army. The pillar of cloud and of fire is between them. Let Pharaoh pass that if he can. All is darkness on one side, and all is light on the other. He presumes—he pursues, he perishes. God’s power that moved the waters made them stand up as a wall, and threw it down on the Egyptian hosts. They are overthrown. God’s people are free. Israel sings—“The Lord hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation.” Look again at the case of Ahab. “And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of his harness: wherefore he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thine hand and carry me out of the host; for I am wounded.” God’s arrows will be sure to find out the wicked. They must be deeply wounded with the arrows of correction, or they will be slain by the arrows of judgment. “God is known by the judgments which he executeth.”

Look at Haman! With the bitterest hate he plots the ruin of the Jews. He succeeds in every step, the decree is past, but God disturbs the Persian king—turns the plot upon Haman, and he is suspended from the gallows he had erected for Mordecai. Revenge is a consuming fire. One life is not enough to satisfy Haman; because Mordecai was a Jew, thousands of Jews must perish for his affront: but the sanguinary scheme produces his own ruin. Haman is but a specimen of multitudes in the Church and in the world;—fretting because they cannot compel others to submit to their dogmas. “All this availeth me nothing while Mordecai the Jew sitteth at the king’s gate.” It is a savage proverb,

"Revenge is sweet;" but the noble maxim of Christianity is—"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

Behold Belshazzar—he robs the Lord's house of the sacred vessels, takes them to Babylon, appoints a night of revelling and dissipation. In the same hour the invisible messenger records the doom of the king and the ruin of his kingdom. "*Mene*, God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. *Tekel*, Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. *Peres*, Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." Let the proud heart bend or it will be made to break; "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!"

Look at Herod; arrayed in costly vestments, he speaks to the people and receives the honor only due to God, and is smitten by the power of God. The haughty tyrant accepts of Divine honors, and becomes an example of Divine judgments. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." In His hand, and within His knowledge and power, are all the avenues to woe, and all the ingredients of misery. He is equally able to pierce the soul and to agonize the body. There is no escape from His power, no concealment from His eye. "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Look at Providence:—

#### IV. IN ITS ASPECT ON THE CHURCH.

While all things are the objects of Divine Providence, the Church is more especially its care. Doth not Providence have under its special guardianship those for whom the Saviour ever lives to make intercession, in whom the hosts of heaven and the spirits of the just take the deepest interest? Is it not of them, as the Church of Christ, that it has been said, "I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." "Thy Maker is

thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called." "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee."

From the beginning, every dispensation of Providence has been made subservient to the purification, safety, and glory, of the Church of Jesus Christ. All the deliverances which were at any time wrought in the world, and all the special punishments which were inflicted, have been for the salvation of those whose faith rested on the coming Saviour. If the laws of nature were reversed, if one family was saved from the deluge, and if the destroying angel could not destroy the cities of the plain until Lot was removed, it was for the good of the Church. If the Red Sea was divided, if fire was deprived of its power, and if lions were rendered harmless, it was for the good of His Church. If deserved judgments have been averted, if extraordinary blessings have been given, and if the counsels of the wise have been confounded, it was for the sake of the Church.

It was for her sake that holy men of God "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" that the living oracles have been committed to writing; that they have been preserved amidst the hostility of ages, and that by God's spirit they are rendered "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." To believers God has given precious blessings and privileges; they are His sons and daughters; He has "prepared a kingdom for them before the foundation of the world;" and under the guidance of the providence and grace of God none of them can ever perish, but shall obtain eternal life. "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."

How wonderful the providence of God appears in the work of redemption! There is no disciplinary and restorative pro-



vidence apart from the Lord Jesus Christ. The close of Christ's kingship will be the end of such providence on earth. We are too apt to overlook this view of Providence. Bring it to the balances of the sanctuary. *What saith the Scripture?* "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the son;" he "hath given him power over all flesh;" "he hath made him head over all things to the church, and put all things in subjection to him." Thus—

"The worlds of nature and of graced are put beneath His sway."

In a word, whatever God is to man, or to the universe itself, it is all in, and by, Jesus Christ. He reigns in order to extend the kingdom of Christ on earth.

What wisdom is seen in the times, the men, and the circumstances by which the Gospel was made known. The twelve fishermen were without arms or eloquence, without wealth or influence, despised and persecuted; yet they were joyful in difficulty, fearless in danger, triumphant in death. God was with them; that was the secret of their success. God is with His Church now, to over-rule, to defend, and to save. It is "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." How strange are the footsteps of Providence in the conversion of men, in placing them under the means of grace; either in bringing the Gospel to them or directing their steps where it is preached. "His ways are past finding out:"—"He makes a way in the wilderness for the footsteps of the flock." There are circumstances, not a few, in which we find such mountains in the way, such obscurity and darkness, such difficulties to struggle with, that we seem to be set fast in our journey, and we are ready to lie down in despair. This is our extremity. Then God appears, and says—"Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain" to make a way for my people, my chosen.

Fear not! Providence may be dark, things may be trying in your experience: He will make a way; you shall be led on. "Thy bread shall be given and water shall be sure."

God is faithful to His promises. "The lot is cast into the lap ; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord."—

"Good, when He gives, supremely good—  
Not less when He denies;  
Even crosses in His sovereign hand  
Are blessings in disguise."

The doctrine of Divine Providence is full of consolation. All must be right when God controls and reigns over all. Here is ground for confidence and trust! "Trust in the Lord Jehovah, for in the Lord is everlasting strength." The child of God cannot be injured. Joseph's brethren thought they had injured him exceedingly. The princes of Babylon thought to injure Daniel. Did they? Oh no, they can only insult, and this we must expect;—for it is "through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom." He who provides for the lion and the raven, will not desert His children—He who takes care of the less valuable creatures of His hands will not neglect the greater. As soon shall the pillars of God's throne fail, as His goodness pass away like the morning cloud; His nature and His word are pledged to take care of us;—and it is ours to believe.

JOHN GEORGE.

SUBJECT:—*Belief in the Divine Omniscience, the Foundation of a True and earnest Life.*

"Thou God seest me."—Genesis xvi. 13.

Analysis of Homily the Three Hundred and Fourth.

NEVER, perhaps, was there a truer or more beautiful theory of life propounded, than that which the great American poet has embodied in his well-known verses:—

"Tell me not in mournful numbers,  
'Life is but an empty dream:'  
For the soul is dead that slumbers,  
And things are not what they seem." &c.

It is just such a poem as the apostle Paul would have delighted to read. It beautifully expresses the spirit of his whole life.

All "real and earnest life" is a constant progress towards something better and higher. It knows no intermission. The thought of to-day becomes the deed of to-morrow, the deed of to-day becomes the moral influence of to-morrow, the resting-place of to-day is but the starting point of to-morrow. An earnest life is like a noble river; its fountain head is a little spring in some solitary moorland. The limpid streamlet gathers strength as it proceeds, widening and deepening as it flows onwards, ever onwards towards the universal terminus—the all-embracing deep.

Life is "real and earnest" *only* when we live for some high and holy purpose. A very large proportion of mankind *only exist*, they do not *live*. They concentrate their energies wholly on the petty affairs of the seen and temporal; their moral nature is an arid desert wherein grow no flowers of wise and beautiful thought, no fruits of holy and useful action. Their souls are buried alive in a gorgeous, but ghastly, sepulchre of present cares, interests, and pleasures.

Life is "real and earnest" to the man who ever acts with the conviction that the all-seeing eye of the Father in heaven is looking down into the deepest depths of his heart of hearts, to whom practical religion is a business and a pleasure, who glorifies God as conscientiously in the market and in the family circle as in the sanctuary, who strives daily to reproduce in his own life the human life of Jesus Christ.

A hearty and thorough recognition of the solemn truth embodied in the words of my text is necessary to a true and earnest life. I shall sever them altogether from their historical connexion, and consider only the thoughts they suggest relative to the concerns of our every-day life. We may view these words as the basis of a living creed; as a motive to a useful and beautiful life; and as a restraint upon a sinful one.

The text may be regarded:—

I. AS THE BASIS OF A LIVING CREED. "Thou God seest me." These words are the doctrinal basis of every true religious creed.

It is the fashion of a certain school of religious teachers to sneer at creeds. "Life" say they, "is everything. If a man's life be true and earnest, it matters little what he believes. All that he requires to know respecting God, and truth, and moral duty, is written on the page of his own heart." This is the most unphilosophical nonsense ever uttered in the sacred name of religion. A man *must* have an objective religious creed. It is a fact that every man has one,—truer or false,—more or less comprehensive.

It is undoubtedly true that moral life is a much more important thing than intellectual belief. Daily actions influence spiritual life far more powerfully than religious creed. But it is also and equally true that what we *believe* very materially influences what we *do*. We cannot, in actual life, separate the *intellectual* from the *moral*, *creed* from *conduct*. Actions are nothing but embodied thoughts. We cannot live a true, earnest, and beautiful life, unless we have a true religious creed as its basis.

Here, then, is a truth which lies at the foundation of every true religious creed. "Thou God seest me." We never begin to live with a high and holy purpose till this truth is interwoven into the actions of our daily life. It is not enough to believe in God as the Omnipresent deity; as the God of nature; as the moral ruler of the universe; as the God of truth revealed in the laws of nature, in the human spirit, and in the Bible. A man may believe all this respecting God, and neither reverence nor love Him.

No! The conception of God which lies at the basis of all true love and reverence is the thought, "Thou God seest me." In every circumstance of my daily life, "Thou God" art with me there. Whatsoever I am doing "Thou God" seest it all. In my solitary moments, when I am silently communing with nature and my own spirit, "Thou God" art there. In my social hours, when I am enjoying the

pleasures of friendship and social intercourse, "Thou God" art there, &c. Let us view these words :—

II. AS AN INCENTIVE TO A USEFUL AND BEAUTIFUL LIFE. It is a law of our spiritual being that we constantly become more like the being we worship. The Buddhist priests have a saying, "Worship Budha, and you yourself will in time become Budha." There is a profound spiritual truth embodied in this saying. Sin transforms the soul into the nature of the devil. Holiness transforms the soul into the nature of God. This law of our spiritual nature is very manifest in our common life. How unconsciously and insensibly we imitate the one we most dearly love ! It is even so in relation to the Divine Being.

Life, regarded in its innermost meaning, has a two-fold relation and significance. There is the *inner* life, the life of the spirit :—this must be *pure* and *holy*. There is the *outer* life :—this must be *useful* and *beautiful*.

The union of the useful and the beautiful is the established order of the universe. What a *beautiful* thing the human eye is ; what grace it adds to the features : it is *useful* also, being the window through which the soul receives its impressions of the outer world. The same union of beauty with utility is manifest in the moral world. God raises up religions, teachers, and authors and legislators ; they are the apostles of the good and the true. He also endows with suitable mental gifts the poets, painters, musicians, sculptors, &c. ; they are the apostles of the beautiful. Wherever you can trace God's working, you invariably find it to be a *union of the useful and the beautiful*.

What spiritual truth does this fact teach us ? Evidently this :—We should imitate the Divine method in our life ;—it should be a union of the *useful* and the *beautiful* ;—beautiful in its spirit, and useful in its moral influence.

Two things are essential to a useful and beautiful life :—

First : *Sincere love of the truth*. I fancy I can hear one sorrowfully asking Pilate's question, "What is truth?"



There are many voices crying out "Lo, here is truth," or "Lo, there." There are many who affirm with oracular dogmatism, "We possess the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Believe our doctrines and teaching, or ye cannot be saved." Believe them not. Salvation is broader and deeper than man's thought. Truth abides not in any school. It has no affinity with the Shibboleth of any party. It has not its full utterance in the dogmas of any Church; of the many voices that address thee there is but one from heaven. *The Bible is the truth.* Take the Bible for thy creed, my brother; it alone can solve thy moral doubts. It alone can lead thy spirit into the unclouded realms of divine light and eternal quiet. Read the Bible;—not in the feeble glow-worm light of human theology, but under the conscious guidance of the Divine Spirit.

Secondly : *Earnest practice of the truth.* The water in a stagnant pool grows fetid and loathsome; it breeds unsightly vermin and pestilential vapors. It is the running stream that is pure and sweet, and which carries a blessing to the thirsty fields. Even so truth,—God's truth,—may stagnate in a man's brains, and become a fetid pool of lifeless doctrine, whose pestilential surface no genial breeze from heaven ever stirs, whose sluggish depths no streams of spiritual life, springing up from within, ever freshen. An active Christian is like the running brook: there is music in the flow of his life, there is freshness and sweetness in his heaven-renewed spirit, there is blessing in his words and deeds.

One of the first principles of practical Christianity is, "No man liveth to himself." We have all *moral influence*: we must use it for *God*, and *man*, and *truth*. We have all *talents*: we must lay them out for the glory of God and the extension of the empire of truth.

The times in which we live call loudly for all who profess Christianity to "be up and doing" in their Master's service. A nominal, half-hearted Christianity is worse than useless when opposed to the selfishness, the mammonism, the indifferentism,

the sensualism, and the infidelism of the present day. Those who alone in these times can fight successfully the battles of the Lord of Hosts are the men of independent mind, of undaunted spirit and unblanching front, who dare to speak their strong convictions of truth and duty in language which men cannot but understand. And what is their reward? They are not unfrequently deserted in the hour of need by timid faint-hearted friends, they are denounced and vilified and persecuted by self-glorifying orthodox Pharisees, and not unfrequently do they receive a more generous sympathy and a heartier appreciation from the so-called *un-Christian* world than they do from the so-called *Christian* Church. But there is one solace that never fails them, one hope that never loses its inspiration,—the thought that a Father of love and truth is looking down from the serene heights of His own eternity on all their work and sorrow and wrong-suffering; a Father who will one day “bring forth their judgment as the light, and their righteousness as the noon-day.” That which nerves their spirit in every conflict with evil and evil-doers is the thought—“Thou God seest me.”

These words may be viewed :—

III. AS A RESTRAINT UPON A SINFUL COURSE. Let these words be an ever-abiding thought in thy mind, my brother. Thou mayest take infinite pains to conceal thy sin and wrong-doing and selfishness from the knowledge of thy fellow-men and even from thine own self; but remember there is a God who sees and knows all;—a God whose calm, truth-loving, sin-hating eye is for ever searching down into the innermost recesses of thy heart.

Let these words “Thou God seest me,” be an ever-abiding conviction in thy heart, my Christian brother. *Let them preserve thee from unhallowed thoughts.* Place them as a *sentinel* before the door of thy heart. *Let them preserve thee from selfish motives.* Set them as *judge* on the throne of conscience to try all thy motives. *Let them preserve thee from*

*formalism and hypocrisy.* Let them be a *Christ* in thy heart to purge it of idols,—to drive out with “whip and scourge” the crowd of “buyers and sellers and money-changers” that too often defile God’s temple. *Let them preserve thee from despondency and unbelief.* “Clouds and darkness are” often “round about” thy Father’s throne. But He sees through every cloud that “veils and darkens his designs.”

Let the thought of an all-seeing God be a constant motive to holiness and purity of spiritual life ;—an ever-abiding incentive to earnestness and fidelity in thy Christian duty ; let it help thee to realize the solemn truth that thy human life is “real and earnest ;”—let it impel thee—

“To be up and doing  
With a heart for any fate :  
Still achieving,—still pursuing,—  
Learn to labor and to wait.”

JOSEPH CARTER.

SUBJECT :—*The Twofold Influence of Christ upon Humanity.*

“And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. And, behold, there was a man named Zaccheus,” &c. Luke xix. 1—10.

*Analysis of Homily the Three Hundred and Fifty.*

WE have here :—

I. THE INFLUENCE CHRIST EXERTS UPON MEN WITHOUT THEIR PURPOSE. As He passed through Jericho, now, multitudes crowded about Him. Zaccheus could not see Him “for the press,”—the dense crowd. So it often was. Like a moral magnet He drew men after Him who had no *purpose* in the matter. This kind of influence did not terminate with His death, but rolled on in an accelerated ratio. The unconverted portion of Christendom is influenced by Him without its *wish* or *purpose*. In this way He has given an external character to the institutions, governments,

literature, habits of the whole civilized world. This is a patent fact; and it serves several important uses. First: *As a presumptive argument in favor of his supernatural claims.* Think of the *obscurity* of Christ as a teacher, the *unpopularity* of his doctrines, and His death as a *malefactor*, and then account on any natural principle for the immense influence that He has, without their purpose, exerted upon the multitudes in all ages. This kind of influence serves:—Secondly: *To explain the progress of the race.* What has lifted the world to its present condition, quickened its general intellect, liberalized its institutions, purified its laws? The influence of Christ! It serves:—Thirdly: *To indicate a solemn element in man's responsibility.* Christ's influence is in the world. This is a fact. It meets you everywhere; and it is a fact that tells wondrously on the world's responsibility. "If I had not come and spoken to them," &c. It serves:—Fourthly: *As a powerful challenge to the infidel to investigate the question.* What would you think of a man, who called himself a philosopher, ignoring one of the most wonderful phenomena of nature? Yet the infidel, who assumes the air of a philosopher, ignores one of the most wonderful phenomena in the social history of man. The Galilean has influenced the ages, and His influence is spreading. Account for it, sceptic. Give the world the philosophy of this great social fact. We have here:—

II. THE INFLUENCE CHRIST EXERTS UPON MEN BY THEIR PURPOSE. Whilst the crowd were drawn they knew not that Zaccheus had an earnest purpose: "he sought to see Jesus." He mastered obstacles; "he climbed," &c. Four facts are observable here. First: *The influence which Christ exerts on the man who has an earnest purpose* IS SPECIAL. Because Zaccheus had this resolve, Christ observes him, singles him out from the crowd, calls him by name, &c. *Christ observes all, but specially marks the enquirer.* He turns His special attention to those whose minds are turned towards Him. Secondly: *The influence which Christ exerts on the man who*

*has an earnest purpose* UNITES TO HIMSELF. "I will abide at thy house." Zaccheus and Christ were brought into close fellowship. "If any man hear my voice, I will come unto him," &c. Thirdly: *The influence which Christ exerts on the man who has an earnest purpose* IS MORALLY RENOVATING. A change passes over his heart. "Behold Lord, the half of my goods," &c. The loving sympathy of Christ acted upon his heart like the vernal sun upon the frost-bound meadows. Fourthly: *The influence which Christ exerts over the man who has an earnest purpose* IS GLORIOUSLY RESTORATIVE. "This day is salvation come to thy house." Salvation ! what a word ! What a sublime reality ! This day started a new era in the spiritual history of Zaccheus. His soul entered on a new train of thought, sympathy, and purpose, a train that would bear him upward and onward for ever. This day his soul emerged from the prison of sin, into a universe warmed, lighted, and vivified by the love of God."\*

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SUBJECT :—*The Loss of Gods.*

"Ye have taken away my gods.....and what have I more ?"  
—Judges xviii. 24.

Analysis of Homily the Three Hundred and Sixty.

I. ALL MEN HAVE A GOD. Man is a god-seeking being ;—he feels a void which he endeavors to fill with a god or "gods." *Whatever a man's god be, he deems it the greatest good.* He thinks more of, and seeks to associate himself more with his god than any other object. He believes his main happiness to consist in the enjoyment of his god ; and he glories in his god. *But man's idea of God are very different and very conflicting.* Some make a god of the means

\* Amongst the incomparable discourses of the late Rev. W. Robertson, of Brighton, whom we regard as one of the most illustrious preachers of any age, will be found one on the text of this Germ.



of gratifying their passions and lusts. The apostle speaks of those "whose god is their belly and whose glory is in their shame." Others make money and riches their gods. Others the praise and approbation of their fellow-creatures, and others the outward rites and ceremonies of religion. The man who spoke the words of the text thought himself very religious ; and so he was in certain respects. He believed and felt that in the possession of the molten and graven images—the ephod and teraphim—with the services of the young Levite, his prosperity, his safety, his happiness, his all consisted ; and while they remained in his house he esteemed himself blessed. But they were taken away, and he felt he was at once undone ! It is to be feared people, nowadays, make the routine of religious performances they regularly go through ; their having been baptized, their profession, their sitting at the Lord's table, and especially any pleasant emotions they may feel in connexion with their attendance upon the means of grace at times,—the gods in whom they trust. *It is one thing to be religious, it is another and a very different matter to be Godly, worshipping the father "in spirit and in truth."*

## II. FALSE GODS CAN BE TAKEN FROM THEIR DEVOTEES.

(1) Often in life. Many, long before they die, lose the means of gratifying sense ; many early in life, though lovers of money, become pitifully poor ; and many, by some means or other are deprived of the means to pursue their accustomed mode of attending to religious rites, and therefore lose their gods. (2) In death. Death awaits us all, and the gods we have named will be inevitably taken from their votaries then. Sense cannot be gratified in death and the grave. No miser has ever been able to take a grain of his adored money to another world. The world's praise and blame are equally unimportant when a man feels he is to be ushered before the judgment-seat ; and all religious rites and formularies are left behind for ever when we enter a world of spirits !

III. THE LOSS, EVEN OF A FALSE GOD, WILL BE FELT TO BE A GREAT LOSS. "What have I more?" To tear the thing we have made our God from us is the greatest bereavement. Even though the thing is bad, it has been loved supremely, and the loss of it will create a vacuum and an agony intolerable. But the conscious loss of the *true* God! this is the climax of suffering. Then the soul is a chaos, an orphan in the universe. If I lose the true God, "What have I more?" (Saul at Endor an example.)

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SUBJECT :—*Wonders in Man's Future History.*

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."  
—2 Peter, iii. 14.

*Analysis of Homily the Three Hundred and Seventy.*

ALL finite spirits have their wonders. Man has wonders on earth, Gabriel has wonders in heaven; God alone is exempt from wonders. Wonders in endless series must ever await the finite. The text points to wonders in man's future history.

I. THAT THE WONDERS IN MAN'S FUTURE ARE TRANSCENDENTLY GREAT. "Such things." What things? (ver 1—14.) The wonders here are twofold, *material* and *spiritual*.

II. THAT THESE WONDERS ARE ANTICIPATED BY SOME. "Ye look for such things." First: *They are expected for very good reasons.* (1) They are certain. The very objection of the sceptic who asks, "where is the promise of his coming?" is itself a reason to believe it; for the Bible predicts his conduct. (2) We have an interest in them. They are intimately connected with us. These are good reasons. Secondly: *They are expected with very different feelings.* By some with *indifference*, by some with *dread*, by some with *rapturous joy*.

III. THAT THESE WONDERS DEMAND PERSONAL PREPAREDNESS. The solemn question which every man should ask in

the prospect of such wonders is:—How shall I become prepared to meet them? The text suggests two things as an answer. (1) Reconciliation with God:—"found of him in peace." (2) Sanctification:—"without spot and blameless."

IV. THAT THESE WONDERS DEMAND CHRISTIAN EARNESTNESS. "Be diligent." An indolent man has no right to expect success in any department of life. Indolence brings ruin; earnestness is a condition of success. (1) Think of the greatness of your work. (2) The brevity of your probationary period. "What is your life?" &c. Indifference, in the view of the appalling wonders that await us all, is the climax of reckless presumption.

FRED. FOX THOMAS.

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SUBJECT:—*Inquiry of Christ.*

"And none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?"—John xvi. 5.

*Analysis of Homily the Three Hundred and Eighth.*

IN these words the great Teacher gently rebuked His disciples for their silence, their unintelligent listening, their want of earnest and spiritual desire to understand Him more fully. Peter had, indeed, previously (xiii. 36) proposed a question—and Thomas said, "We know not whither thou goest;"—but neither asked in a right manner. They asked unintelligently and as if Christ were about to proceed on an earthly journey.

And now, having declared whither he was going, He perceives that they understand not the deep import of His words—they are silent through sorrow on account of His declared departure, instead of earnestly inquiring into the reason thereof; and He would stir their souls to put the question in a right spirit that they might learn the right answer. Oh, if they could but understand the expediency of

His departure, how different would be their feelings? "Ye would rejoice," &c. But in their neglect of earnest inquiry we see a picture of the conduct of multitudes—even of disciples of Christ, at this hour.

Observe :—

I. THAT EARNEST INQUIRY IS THE WAY TO TRUTH. It is so in science—philosophy—religion. Truth is enwrapping us all around, but it will be "inquired of." Discoveries are not made without investigation. We must go beneath the surface of things. Multitudes have passed over gold fields without dreaming of the treasures beneath their feet. Let the mind be ever open, watching, to catch the least indication of truth from every quarter. And observe, that the gaining of no absolute amount of knowledge is in relation to the soul's eternal destiny of such value as the possession of a true spirit of investigation. The whole universe shall be its minister and joy for ever.

II. THAT EARNEST INQUIRY OF CHRIST IS THE WAY TO THE HIGHEST, DIVINEST, TRUTH. "I am the way, the truth, and the life." "It pleased the father that in him should all fulness dwell." Do you ask—What is God? What is His relation to man? How may man stand accepted with God? What is man designed to be? All are answered in and by Christ. But who shall fathom the depths of all His words? Let us dwell less upon human systems which too frequently distort the truth and always leave some phases of truth out of view, and learn more and more to ponder and pray over the words of Christ. Let us listen to His voice *within* us. "*Sir, we would see Jesus.*"

III. THAT ABUNDANT OPPORTUNITIES ARE AFFORDED FOR SUCH INQUIRY. The Teacher stood in the midst of His disciples when He uttered our text. He is amongst us still: in His recorded life and words—by another helper, "the Spirit of Truth;" every day as the scroll of time unfolds we see

new truth written, or old truth inscribed by His hand in new forms. We can still sit with Jesus at 'the supper table—we can hold communion with Him still—He is ever manifesting Himself to the believing, loving, obedient heart.

IV. THAT CHRIST IS DESIROUS THAT HIS DISCIPLES SHOULD AVAIL THEMSELVES OF SUCH OPPORTUNITIES OF INQUIRY, AND GRIEVED AT THEIR NEGLECT THEREOF. "Learn of me." "Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." Oh, that we were but as eager to inquire after truth as Jesus Christ is to impart it. Few things gave Him more grief than the slowness and incapacity of His disciples to receive and understand His words. His heart was longing to impart truth, peace and joy to them, but how little did they receive. "Have I been so long here with you and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?" And now, how culpable are many still—satisfied with present knowledge, endless repetitions of what they have known for years, without striving earnestly after higher things. Let us ever be going with fresh eyes and hearts to inquire of the Master.

V. THAT THESE OPPORTUNITIES NEGLECTED CANNOT BE RECALLED. "A little while, and ye shall not see me : whither I go ye cannot come." A few moments after Christ uttered the text, they went forth,—*that* hour of inquiry departed for ever along with all the benefit which a right use thereof would have procured. So pass away from us all a thousand opportunities unimproved!

"Moments seize,  
Heaven's on their wing; a moment we may wish,  
When worlds want wealth to buy."

BRYAN DALE, M.A.

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SUBJECT :—*The Triumph of Christianity.*

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."—Heb. xi. 13.

Analysis of Homily the Three Hundred and Ninth.

THE text contains three facts :—

First: That the patriarchs received certain promises. Secondly: That they died without seeing them fulfilled. Thirdly: That the promises were fulfilled in the same world in which they were made. What were the promises? The possession of the land of Canaan, and the establishment of the Theocracy. (1) The passage admits of this interpretation. (2) It requires it. (3) This interpretation harmonizes with the context and with the whole chapter. What Judaism was to the patriarchs, that Christianity is to us. Judaism was to them *certain, distant, and much desired.*

I. WE LOOK UPON THE TRIUMPH OF CHRISTIANITY AS A MATTER OF CERTAINTY. Pure Christianity, as it came from Christ, must prevail. (1) We do not draw this conclusion from the signs of the times. Signs of the times are useful as encouragements, but bad as foundations of faith. (2) This triumph as to its certainty does not depend on the progress of humanity. Had this been the case, it would retrograde rather than advance. (3) It does not depend on the agency of the Christian Church. *The clear and emphatic declaration of the word of God is the proof of its future triumph.*

II. THIS TRIUMPH IS AFAR OFF, NOTWITHSTANDING ITS CERTAINTY. Many suppose that its triumph is near and at hand, and that when it is complete, the earth will be destroyed by fire. This opinion is founded :—

(1) On wrong views of prophecy. (2) On wrong interpretation of prophecy. (3) On wrong views of God's government. The human mind as affected by sin is ever prone to misinterpret God's character and works.

III. THIS TRIUMPH, THOUGH FAR DISTANT, IS MUCH TO BE DESIRED. As the patriarchs died without seeing the fulfilment of the Jewish promises, so probably we must all die without seeing the fulfilment of the Christian. We may infer :—

(1) Our own littleness as compared with those who shall witness this glorious triumph. (2) The moral grandeur of man. We can look into the future, even into eternity. No other earthly being can. (3) The future triumph of Christianity, desired and anticipated by the Christian, throws beautiful light on his dying hour.

Ανθρωπος.

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SUBJECT:—*Fellowship with Christ's Sufferings.*

“And the fellowship of his sufferings,” &c.—Phil. iii. 10.

Analysis of Homily the Three Hundred and Tenth.

THERE are three kinds of suffering:—

I. THOSE IN WHICH CHRIST COULD HAVE NO FELLOWSHIP. These are :—First: *Sufferings arising from inward conflict.* The warring of the two laws. The wicked are like the “troubled sea.” Christ knew nothing of these. There was harmony within. Secondly: *Sufferings arising from self-crimination.* Such as Cain and Judas had. Christ never experienced these. Thirdly: *Sufferings arising from disappointments.* Much of our suffering consists in the frustrating of plans and the blighting of hopes. Christ was not disappointed—He knew all.

II. THOSE WHICH CHRIST EXPERIENCED AND IN WHICH MAN CAN HAVE NO FELLOWSHIP. There arise :—First: *From the uniqueness of his capacity.* (1) Of knowing evil. He fully comprehended the origin, the history, the bearings, the enormity, and the ultimate issues of sin. Our future sufferings are mercifully concealed from us ; but the whole sea of anguish was spread before Him—He saw every billow that should break upon His soul. (2) His capacity of feeling evil was unique. Some men are so selfish that they only feel

things that bear directly on themselves; others on their families; others on the nation: a philanthropist feels all the evils that bear on his race. Christ on the universe. Secondly: *The uniqueness of His position.* His sufferings were *vicarious*. Notice such expressions as these—"Awake O sword," &c. "It pleased the Lord to bruise Him," &c. "He suffered, the just for the unjust," &c.

III. THOSE IN WHICH MEN ARE BOUND TO HAVE A FELLOWSHIP WITH CHRIST. We are commanded to be "partakers" of some of His sufferings. First: We should have fellowship with the intense regret which He felt *on account of the existence of moral evil.* The fact of evil sat as a mountain of agony on the heart of Christ. Sin was a horrible thing to Christ; "the abominable thing" He hated. Secondly: We should have fellowship with *the sorrowful sympathies which He had for the sufferings of men.* "His tears over Jerusalem," &c. Thirdly: We should have fellowship with those sufferings which He endured on account of the *dishonor sin does to the Infinite Father.*

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SUBJECT:—*The Word of God, the Highest Manifestation.*

"Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name."—Psalm cxxxviii. 2.

Analysis of Homily the Three Hundred and Eleventh.

IF we take the "name" of God to stand for His *character* which is its general signification, and His "*word*" to stand for His written revelation, which we can scarcely avoid doing, then the words as they stand, convey undoubtedly the idea that God has made His revelation of Himself greater than Himself. This is an absurdity. We therefore look for another reading, and adopt the following, given by Hengstenberg:—"Thou hast magnified thy name above all through which thou hast manifested thyself." The idea in the mind of the Psalmist seems to have been this, that God's written revelation is the highest manifestation of Himself.

I. IT IS THE HIGHEST MANIFESTATION OF THE DIVINE CHARACTER. (1) The Bible is a manifestation through *moral mind*. This is greater than material nature; for the following reasons:—Moral mind is an uncompounded essence.—It is a divine offspring.—It is a self-modifying agent.—It is an original fountain of influences. You cannot predicate these things of matter. (2) It is a manifestation through the *moral mind* of a unique personage. Compare Christ with the greatest men.

II. IT IS THE HIGHEST MANIFESTATION FOR THE HIGHEST END. (1) It is a restoration. Restoration is a greater work either than destruction or sustentation. (2) It is the restoration of immortal souls. The restoration of a wrecked vessel may be a great work, the restoration of a dead flower is a greater, that of a body is still greater, the restoration of a disorganized empire is still greater, but that of an immortal soul is the greatest of all. (3) It is the restoration of a condemned criminal to a high position in the divine empire. "Kings and priests," &c. (4) It is the restoration of a diseased soul to immortal health and ever increasing energy.

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SUBJECT:—*God's Character; the Sublimest Object and Mightiest Organ.*

"I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."  
—John xvii. 26.

Analysis of Homily the Three Hundred and Twelfth.

I. THE DIVINE CHARACTER IS THE HIGHEST OBJECT OF MANIFESTATION. Not only is it the highest function of the material and angelic universe to manifest God, but also of *Christ,—the greatest being*. II. THE DIVINE CHARACTER IS THE GRAND INSTRUMENT OF MORAL REFORMATION. (1) Moral reformation consists in the transfusion of divine love into souls. "That the love," &c. (2) This can only be done through a manifestation of the divine character. His character alone generates love,

# Stars of Christendom.

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## GREGORY OF NAZIANZ.

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GREGORY was born about 330, at Arianz, in the neighborhood of Nazianz, in the south-west of Cappadocia. The inhabitants of Cappadocia were proverbial for immorality, but the father and mother of Gregory were shining exceptions. The father, whose name was also Gregory, had been baptized in 325, the year of the Council of Nice, and had been bishop of Nazianz for some time when the son was born. His mother, Nonna, had been nurtured in the Christian faith. She was remarkable for piety and force of character, and our Gregory was made what he became largely by her maternity and influence. Hardly was he born, before the mother hurried to the church and there consecrated him.

The youth longed for knowledge. He studied first at Cæsareia in Cappadocia, where he was probably associated with Basil, afterwards bishop of that place, his close and life-long friend. Gregory soon departed for Cæsareia in Palestine, where he studied oratory. Then he was nurtured in philosophy at the venerable Alexandria of Clement, Origen and Athanasius. Athens, the centre of learning, was the aim of his youthful ambition, as the climax of his preparatory course. Having with difficulty escaped shipwreck on the voyage, he solemnly dedicated himself anew to God's service. At Athens he again met with Basil, and also with Julian, afterwards Emperor, whom he greatly disliked. Here he studied grammar, rhetoric, mathematics, philosophy, medicine, music, and Greek literature. Basil was more inclined to a life of activity, Gregory to quiet contemplation. Each was able to supplement the other's defect, and their mutual influence became as beneficial as their love was deep and strong.

Having received baptism, Gregory was, in the year 361, ordained priest by his aged father, whom he now for some time assisted. Gregory had persuaded his brother Cæsarius, a physician, to withdraw from the court of Julian, who was now emperor. Gregory and Basil became obnoxious to the



anti-Christian emperor, and the consequences might have been serious, but for the death of Julian in 363.

Gregory sometimes visited Basil in an attractive retreat in Pontus, which the latter thus describes; (Epist. 14.) "There is a lofty chain of mountains, covered with a thick forest, well-watered on the north side by cool, clear brooks; at the foot of this there is an expanse of gently-sloping meadows, which are always enriched and fertilized by the mountain-streams. This meadow-land is naturally and so thickly fenced round with trees of the greatest variety, that they form almost a regular enclosure, and shut it in like a solitary island. On two sides descends a deep ravine; on the third side the stream throws itself from a declivity into the depth below, and forms an impassible barrier. And how shall I still further describe the sweet smell of the meadows, the refreshing breezes from the river, the variety of flowers, and the vast number of singing-birds? But what makes the spot most pleasing to me, is that in addition to the fruitfulness of it in all other respects, it affords to me the sweetest fruit of quiet and repose; and this not merely because of the remoteness thereof from the city's bustle, but because no wanderer ever treads this lonely wilderness, unless it be occasionally some hunter, who is in pursuit, not of bears or wolves, of which there are none, but of the deer, the roe, the hare, which this track produces in great numbers." But he says in another epistle (2) "What I now do in this solitude, by day and by night, I am almost ashamed to say. I may indeed have relinquished my residence in the city as a source of a thousand evils; but myself I cannot leave behind." As bishop of Cæsareia, Basil created a new See in the small town of Sasima, thirty-two miles from Nazianz, that Gregory might be the bishop. This policy, and Gregory's aversion to the See, occasioned some shyness between the friends. Gregory's father soon after induced him to share the See of Nazianz. His brother Cæsarius had died in 368 or 369, then his sister, and, in 374, died his venerable father, at the age of nearly a hundred years. The widow Nonna did not long survive. Death surprised her praying one day in the church. With one hand she took hold of the table, raised the other, saying, "Be merciful unto me, O Christ, my King!" and sank lifeless. After his father's death, Gregory retained for awhile the supervision

of the church, without formally assuming the bishopric. In the next year, he was induced by illness and his inclination to retirement, to withdraw to Silencia in Isauria.

Now began the real work of his life, which was contending against the Arians for the orthodox Catholic doctrine which had been adopted at the Council of Nice. In the year 379, his dear friend Basil died, and in the same year Gregory was called to Constantinople, by the wish of many of the orthodox bishops and of the Emperor Theodosius. Here he preached to large congregations in a chapel, which was named Anastasia, to signify the resurrection of the orthodox doctrine. He was soon compelled to accept the bishopric. He was very successful as a preacher, and as an opponent of the Arians. But from failure of insight into character, owing to his life of retirement, he was laid open to the flatteries, deceptions, and plots, of Maximus, an artful impostor. On the death of Meletius of Antioch, at the second ecumenical council, held at Constantinople, in 381, Gregory probably succeeded him as president. This post occasioning him great discomfort, finding that his enemies were endeavoring to drive him from his See, he resigned the bishopric. The sermon which he delivered on the occasion in the Church of St. Sophia is truly great.

"Farewell Anastasia, whose very name speaks piety, thou that gavest a new life to the Catholic doctrine, when buried under ignominy and contempt; farewell, I say, thou seat of common victory, thou Shiloh, into which we brought and fixed the ark of God, after it had wandered up and down in the desert for forty years together. And thou great and venerable temple, the new inheritance, which owest the magnificence thou now enjoyest to the orthodox Faith, and which of a Jebus we made a Jerusalem. And all the rest of you churches, that approach to it in splendor and beauty, and that like chains compass about and connect the several parts of the city, which we in the midst of all our weakness, enabled by Divine assistance, as contemptible as we were made, were wont to fill in our circular visitations.  
 . . . . . Farewell my episcopal chair, thou dangerous and envied throne; farewell thou assembly of bishops, persons venerable for your age and gravity, and all the rest of you that officiate at the holy table and minister before God, who 'is nigh to them that draw nigh to Him.' Fare-

well the quires of Nazarites, the harmonious psalmodes, nocturnal stations, the modest virgins, grave matrons, the crowds of widows and orphans, the eyes of the poor, always intent upon God and us. Farewell hospitals, lovers of Christ and helpers of mine infirmities. Farewell the affectionate frequenters of my sermons, the crowds thronging to the Church, the swift-handed notaries, and these rails so often prest upon by my greedy auditors. Farewell Emperors, with your courts and courtiers. . . . Farewell great city, thou lover of Christ and His religion; for I'll 'bear thee record that thou hast a zeal, but not according to knowledge.' Parting has rendered us more mutually kind. Embrace the truth, and at length change for the better, worship God oftener than you used to do; 'tis no dishonor to alter for the better, but to persist in a bad course is pernicious and deadly. Farewell east and west, for whom and by whom we are opposed and troubled; witness he that can make us quiet, if a few would but give way, and imitate my resignation. A thing that may be done without any considerable disadvantage; for they lose not God who desert their thrones, but secure to themselves a throne above, much more sublime and safe. . . . 'Little children, keep that which I have committed to you.' 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.' Amen."

Gregory now left Constantinople for Arianz, delivering on his way a funeral oration for Basil at Cæsarcia. His remaining years were spent at Arianz, far from the turmoil of courts and councils, in philosophic and godly contemplation, in letters, and in gardening. In an iambic poem he took a review of his life. At length, after long and sharp suffering, he died in the year 389.

Gregory was of middle stature, with mild and amiable face, hair grey, and eye-brows prominent. He was never married; for while he held that wedlock was lawful and sacred, he thought a peculiar blessing belonged to virginity. His garments were coarse, his manners unpolished, his living plain, his temper was not always in good discipline. He was given to philosophy, and his imagination was active and fertile. His love for nature is such as to refute the absurd notion which limits a susceptibility of our common constitution to modern times. Witness this poetic strain:—(Oration 44.)

*(To be Continued.)*

# Rays of Genius.

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THE LATE F. W. ROBERTSON, OF BRIGHTON.

## "WHAT IS TRUTH?"

THE Truth cannot be compressed into a sermon. The reply to Pilate's question cannot be contained in any verbal form. Think you, that if Christ Himself could have answered that question in a certain number of sentences, He would have spent thirty years of life in witnessing to it? Some men would compress into the limits of one reply, or one discourse, the Truth which it took Christ thirty years to teach, and left unfinished for the Spirit to complete.

One word. The Truth is infinite as the firmament above you. In childhood, both seem near and measurable; but with years they grow and grow; and seem further off, and further and grander, and deeper, and vaster, as God Himself; till you smile to remember how you thought you could touch the sky, and blush to recollect the proud and self-sufficient way in which you used to talk of knowing or preaching "The Truth."

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## "THE PRINCIPLE OF THE SPIRITUAL HARVEST."

THE religious tradesman complains that his honesty is a hindrance to his success; that the tide of custom pours into the doors of his less scrupulous neighbours in the same street, while he himself waits for hours idle. My brother! do you think that God is going to reward honor, integrity, high-mindedness, with this world's coin? Do you fancy that He will pay spiritual excellence with plenty of custom? Now, consider the price that man has paid for his success. Perhaps mental degradation and inward dishonor. His advertisements are all deceptive; his treatment of his workmen tyrannical; his cheap prices made possible by inferior articles. Sow that man's seed, and you will reap that man's harvest. Cheat, lie, advertise, be unscrupulous in your assertions, custom will come to you. But if the price is too dear, let him have his harvest, and take yours; yours is a clear conscience, a pure mind, rectitude within and without. Will you part with that for his? Then why do you complain? He has paid his price, you do not choose to pay it.

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“THE LONELINESS OF CHRIST.”

THE world has small sympathy for Divine goodness: but it also has little for a great many other qualities which are disagreeable to it. You meet with no response—you are passed by—find yourself unpopular—meet with little communion.—Well? Is that because you are above the world, nobler, devising and executing grand plans which they cannot comprehend; vindicating the wronged, proclaiming and living on great principles: offending it by the saintliness of your purity, and the unworldliness of your aspirations? Then yours is the loneliness of Christ. Or is it that you are wrapped up in self—cold, disobliging, sentimental, indifferent about the welfare of others, and very much astonished that they are not deeply interested in you? *You* must not use these words of Christ. They have nothing to do with you.

The Redeemer's soul was alone in dying. The hour had come—they were all gone, and He was, as He predicted, left alone. All that is human drops from us in that hour. Human faces flit and fade, and the sounds of the world become confused. “I shall die alone”—yes, and alone you live. The philosopher tells us that no atom in creation touches another atom—they only approach within a certain distance; then the attraction ceases, and an invisible something repels—they only *seem* to touch. No soul touches another soul except at one or two points; and those chiefly external,—a fearful and a lonely thought; but one of the truest of life. Death only realizes that which has been fact all along. In the central deeps of our being we are alone.

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“MAN'S MEASURE OF HAPPINESS.”

THIS is Life. The sorrows of the past stand out most vividly in our recollections; because they are the keenest of our sensations. At the end of a long existence we should probably describe it thus, “Few and evil have the days of the years of thy servant been.” But the innumerable infinitesimals of happiness that from moment to moment made life sweet and pleasant, are forgotten; and very richly has our Father mixed the materials of these with the homeliest actions and domesticities of existence. See two men meeting together in the streets; mere acquaintances. They will not be five minutes together before a smile will overspread their



countenances, or a merry laugh ring of, at the lowest, amusement. This has God done. God created the smile and the laugh, as well as the sigh and the tear. The aspect of this life is stern; very stern. It is a very superficial account of it which slurs over its grave mystery, and refuses to hear its low, deep undertone of anguish. But there is enough, from hour to hour, of bright, sunny happiness, to remind us that its Creator's highest name is Love.

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#### "THE SCEPTICISM OF PILATE."

THESE are the two results which come from all claims to infallibility, and all prohibition of inquiry. They make bigots of the feeble-minded who cannot think: cowardly bigots, who at the bidding of their priests or ministers swell the ferocious cry which forces a government, or a judge, or a bishop, to persecute some opinion which they fear and hate; turning private opinion into civil crime: and they make sceptics of the acute intellects which, like Pilate, see through their fallacies, and, like Pilate, too, dare not publish their misgivings.

And it matters not in what form that claim to infallibility is made: whether in the clear, consistent way in which Rome asserts it, or whether in the inconsistent way in which churchmen make it for their church, or religious bodies for their favorite opinions: wherever penalties attach a conscientious conviction, be they the penalties of the rack and flame, or the penalties of being suspected, and avoided, and slandered, and the slur of heresy affixed to the name, till all men count him dangerous lest they too should be put out of the synagogue,—and let every man who is engaged in persecuting any opinion ponder it: these two things must follow—you make fanatics, and you make sceptics; believers you cannot make.

Disagreement is refreshing when two men lovingly desire to compare their views to find out the truth. Controversy is wretched when it is an attempt to prove one another wrong. Therefore Christ would not *argue* with Pilate. Religious controversy does only harm. It destroys the humble inquiry after truth: it throws all the energies into an attempt to prove ourselves right. In that despairing spirit no man gets at truth: "*The meek will He guide in judgment. . . .*"

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## THE BUSINESS OF RELIGION.

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SOME make trade their religion, others make religion their trade. The first act as though heaven's estates were purchasable with earthly gold; the others hope to increase earthly wealth by exhibiting a forged diploma of Christian conduct. The first trade honestly and believe they are therefore entirely good, the others appear pious that they may be believed honest, and so be trusted to their own advantage.

There are many also, to whom religious practices are so engrossing, and their religion consequently so austere, as to exclude natural and social business. These in a somewhat different sense make religion their only trade—and many there are whose trade so confines and stints their hearts' growth, that no power is left to produce the beautiful blossoms of religious affection. The world has always been full of these latter. In ancient times, there lived many who with more fervency and less wisdom than belongs to these far-sighted and somewhat cold-hearted days, lived recluses that they might be pious. Whatever else there might have been in the religion of hermits, at least there were fervency and deep, though quiet enthusiasm. But their conduct "was wrong," say the voices of the moderns. Perhaps so. We look with contempt on the mistakes of our childhood, and call even its zeal, error. And we are partially, right. But let us not ungratefully jeer at that which only appears foolish because we have outgrown it. Who can confidently declare that all that ancient hermit-life was barren and unholy? "The really good were exceptions," it is said. True, but are not the really good always exceptions, whether in the desert or in London? So, while holding our own time to be the best, let us give the past its due, knowing that through its dim and tortuous paths have we reached the clearer and brighter present.

So to learn the story of ancient hermits, and so to read the career of modern merchants, as to draw forth the true principles which lie at the foundation of all good lives, and to unite for practical guidance the varying, though never contradictory, truth, is a worthier course, than bigot-like to condemn either.

Idleness, untimely disgust because of disappointment, unmanly fear of a life of struggle, morbid zeal,—such as these had place in a hermitage; and yet there remained what was good and abiding. Let it be borne in mind, that a multitude of hermit-souls remain still—aye, live all around us—souls whose lives *must* be led quietly—whose reli-

gion is unfit to bear social conflict. There are pious men who cannot go up to the high places, and speak boldly in the face of a world; women who cannot bear a testimony for God except by submission, and silent patience. Such is not the highest kind of life, but it is one kind, and has its own peculiar value. Believe not, sectarian world, that we Protestants have utterly crushed the monkish life out of our religion! That monkish life was but the abuse of a state of heart necessary to all good men. Every man's consciousness is an anchorite, and often doth it urge the man into solitudes, that it may commune undisturbed with spiritual things. Of this deep truth, that things of the soul are *for* the soul, that what is closest and dearest is farthest from the world's eye, all Scripture and all poesy witness; and no experiences gainsay. This truth, like a beautiful sea-shell entangled in a mass of worthless weed, lay in that age of hermits, mingled with falsities and follies; yet it *did* lie there, and only by its means did the weeds of error form so stubborn a mass. In that age the Church went into the wilderness and lived its probation and seclusion—went thither led by the spirit of error, but came forth with the reformers purified and strengthened to serve actively the Spirit of Truth.

Our modern merchant-life, however, is by no means clear of more pernicious errors. How hard is it to plant firmly the roots of religious faith in such a soil of materialism! How poor and flaccid are the blooms of holy life in such an atmosphere! The battle being now against "hidden things of darkness," the wrestling energy of those dead warriors who fought against "flesh and blood" is likely to depart from their sons, and to give place to a treacherously-prudent generalship. That which gave our warrior-fathers valor—the face of their foe, is wanting to us. Our foe has neither face nor broadsword, but is shapeless, because spiritual, and tenfold more dangerous, because unseen. Our courage is shown in silent effort, and our endurance in silent patience. The spirit of worldliness is the modern devil. A gentleman is he, with a fashionable garb, but a hollow heart of deceit. He will seldom grapple openly and roughly with us. "The fiery darts" of this Apollyon are exchanged for courteous and deluding speech. Very unwilling is he, forsooth, to stand in the way of our progress to the Celestial City; he rather requests to be allowed to accompany us thither, well knowing the chances of our arrival in such company.

Now much has been said lately about the "religion of business"—"All work is holy in itself, and religion is a spirit to be exemplified in common life—there is a worship in toil, an aristocracy of labor." Such words stir our hearts, and certainly truer were never uttered. But at the very door of truth, the robber falsehood continually lurks; and in our thoughts concerning the dignity of labor we may forget

that such dangers are nigh, and in our endeavor to give due weight to the truth, that common life is holy, we may neglect the divinely-planned temple service, and the life which is holier still ; we may forget that without a business made of religion, there can never be a "religion of business."

A few thoughts may be given here, which however are intended rather to remind of old truths, than to suggest new.

It requires no proof that to DO ANYTHING IN A SPIRITUAL MANNER, WE MUST OURSELVES BE SPIRITUAL. Yet people who are utterly unconscious of religious life talk of themselves as spiritual persons, and conceive that their actions are full of spiritual life. Here is a great fallacy, and the more difficult to combat as it is not a conviction, but a persuasion ;—no mistake of the reason, but a result of the sloth of reason. Even those who are aware of this error, and who lead lives more or less religious, are in danger therefrom, in that many allow themselves a license in doing social business, and a license in neglecting definite religious study, just from the very impression that the popular truth makes upon them ; and thus they fall lower and lower towards the level of those who put outward uprightness in the place of inner holiness.

The religion that is meant to stand against foes and treacherous friends, and by an in-dwelling force to mould dull earth to a heavenly likeness must be planted deep in the heart, and must be firmly fixed there by silent growth.

The temple must be founded in darkness that its dome may great the sunlight : and the flower must push its fibrous roots into the soil, that its blossom may beautify the garden ; but the house will fall and tree decay if the foundation of the one be not stoutly built, and the roots of the other do not grow. Religion is like a temple in its need of a massive foundation, builded in the "secret parts," and like a flower in its need of vigorous and ever-growing roots. Now it may be noticed more definitely, that a business must be made of religion in order to counteract certain tendencies which a life of social activity strengthens. Of these we will mention but two :—

(1) We have a great tendency to allow one good quality to excuse us from the exercise of others. It is often noticed that men famous for certain public virtues, are infamous through the want of private ones. An active life calls off the attention from simpler and quieter duties, and those who neglect such, excuse themselves on account of some fame they enjoy for the possession of noticeable worth. This worth may be really theirs ; for it is astonishing how much good and evil can co-exist in the same life. Life is active enough now, and there is a danger to us all lest we become partial—become only busy-bodies, not real men in Christ. It is as possible to be, in a cer-

tain sense, religious in a counting-house, and not so at the fireside, as it is to be religious on Sunday, and worldly, aye, wicked all the rest of the week.

To cultivate religion earnestly, as an inward and secret business, tends to make a man more complete ; and to foster religious feeling and thought is to cultivate the heart, from which are alike born noble valor for active struggle, and gentle patience for home sorrows.

(2) We Christians are engaged more or less, together with all the world, in putting the body in place of the soul, the outward for the inward. A religious man attempting to lead a business-life religiously, that is (for this should be the aim of our life here) to make outward activities, expressions and illustrations of the inward spirit of goodness!—attempting, we say, to do this without cultivating and strengthening that inward spirit, is permitting that power to languish by which alone he can hope to succeed. It is not earth which is most important in life ; the material having power to feed and strengthen the spiritual. The material has no influence in the growth of holy life, if that life be not of force sufficient to mould and move the body it inhabits. Many speak of the storms and temptations of the world as if the power they gave to religious life made it independent of all secret cultivation. Thus is truth pitted against truth—an unnatural warfare. Storms will give no strength to one whose religious doings are the jerks and twitches of an automaton, or the movements of dull habit ; and surely the soul must be kept alive, if outward actions are to be manifestations of life. This evil is a greater danger, in that if the “seen and handled” exclude the “unseen,” the very flesh and blood as it were of our soul’s life will ossify, and we shall truly stand

“Like tombs to mark the memory.”

of a departed life.

It is suggested then THAT THE MORE ACTIVE THE LIFE IS, THE MORE DOES IT REQUIRE PRIVACY,—That the man who endures the greatest and most frequent storms has most need to secure hermit-life seclusion. He who works hardest should pray hardest ; he who talks most should think most, just as he who would be most charitable must be most economical.

If then we determine to live in a really Christian activity, we shall endeavor to translate the truth of the anchorite into our modern life of hurry ;—and these two thoughts we should distinctly keep before our minds :—

(1) That seclusion for spiritual work is a part of our religion, as well as the means to give strength for public work.

(2) Such seclusion is *always*, also, for increase of practical power.

All religious means are also ends ; for a spiritual life is a constant progression “from strength to strength.” We win one point that we



may reach to that still in advance. These bowers of refreshment and places of prayer, though they stand on the high road to perfection as solaces and helps to the traveller, yet must be entered as part of the traveller's object. Each is a goal, though each forwards our journey to the next; and if we were not thus advancing, and had reached a state (certainly inconceivable) where we stood still, as without a road on which to travel,—yet we might enter a bower, or kneel in prayer. Now, religious thought and Christian study, prayer, and praise, are as much parts of a religious life, as if the life itself needed no help therefrom. Consider how small a portion of existence do the things for which we spend health and life, occupy!

Is then the great spirit of goodness in our heart only for the sanctification of these few affairs? Are not these concerns rather for the better growth of the spirit? Surely it is so. The business of religion is the great matter—to cultivate a good heart is the chief thing, and earth is the helper in this education. The lower is servant to the higher. But how many voices cry out—"What need of this repetition of old sayings? Do we not know that "religion is our chief concern?" Yes, we do know, and in this very knowledge often lies our danger. If we know, how constantly do we put our knowledge out of mind as a settled thing, and lo! we forget to think about and practice that we have learned so thoroughly! And who that observes the ceaseless activity of "The Age," and sees how much the horizon of men's minds is narrowed and confined to the present business, feels not the need of constant repetition? We are sorely tempted to forget religious claims altogether, and when reminded that religion can be shown in our common duties, we are still tempted either to make our trade our only religion, or to exhibit a religion which we do not truly hold as a spiritual possession.

Yet it must on the other hand be remembered THAT SECLUSION FOR SPIRITUAL WORK IS ALWAYS FOR INCREASE OF PRACTICAL POWER. No man can live wholly as an anchorite without sin. Let none *burrow* in the ground, because in the ground the foundation must be laid. Many a hermit-like spirit has much ado to battle through life, and to him such temptations come with force. But it is as foolish to grope about a foundation without a house, as to build a castle without a foundation. Pray much, but work, or the soul having no outlet will stagnate. Think much, but speak, or thoughts will be as rough stone, useless in the dark quarry.

Religion then has a heart as well as a body. The hermitage is a coward's refuge; but hermit-hours are a wise man's rest. Such are needed to give strength to the spirit, whose manifestations our life should be, that heavenly powers may root themselves firmly within us. By means of such we counteract the temptations to neglect

private and quiet goodness, and to become holy and unworldly. Such we prize, for in them do we converse with natures akin to our own. Such hours we use as aids to activity, not as ultimate ends; for recognising our two-fold nature, and feeling the claims of the strangely and confusedly mingled world, we pray in order to *act* better, and act in order to be better.

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## Literary Notices.

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We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.

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### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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THE SINLESSNESS OF JESUS: an Evidence for Christianity. By Dr. C. ULLMANN. Translated from the sixth German edition. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark.

DR. ULLMANN is well known as one of the foremost of that noble band, who, after the great German apostacy, have labored and fought their way back to genuine Christian doctrine and godliness. His name is associated with the *Studien und Kritiken*, and with many other noble works, periodical and otherwise, more or less known, and characterized by a union of learning and philosophy, for the service of man's supreme Master, and the defence of his dearest inheritance. Many years ago, Messrs. Clark published in "The Student's Library," a little treatise bearing the title of that which is now before us, which was originally written for the *Studien und Kritiken*, but in this sixth edition the book is so greatly enlarged as to be entitled to be regarded as a new work.

The argument is essentially the same with that of Dr. YOUNG'S "Christ of History," and the two works are worthy of each other. The German's is fuller, and is less easy reading--the Briton's clearer and more direct. We are inclined somewhat to demur to the title of Ullmann's. "Sinlessness" is a negative term, and the character of Christ has in it all positive perfection. While both of these propositions are affirmed by Ullmann, it is rather unaccountable that he should have chosen the term which, though it involves all, does not directly signify enough. The work itself is beyond our praise.

Believing that it faithfully exhibits what is at once the essence and the proper evidence of Christianity, we rejoice therein and heartily thank the author. There are four parts, besides the introduction and the supplement :—Part I. The idea of Sinlessness and its realization in the person of Jesus: Part II. Christianity itself a proof of the Sinlessness of Jesus: Part III. Objections. Part IV. Inferences. The translation we think to be admirably executed. This style of doctrine is what is wanted by theological students. It is what is wanted in our pulpits. No man can so directly serve the cause of humanity, as by bringing the peerless perfection of Jesus directly and clearly before the eyes of men.

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THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST: an Inquiry into the Fact and the Doctrine of the Christian Atonement. By CHARLES WILLIAMS, of Accrington. London: Simpkin, Marshall and Co.

THE interpretation of the death of Christ is the master problem of theology. The due treatment of it requires rare qualifications, long preparation, and investigation at once laborious and sagacious. Especially it demands fresh and unprejudiced mental vision, and moral courage, to state clearly and forcibly the result. First, there is what is called the *subjective* side, which, duly managed, would set forth why Christ submitted to death, and this submission as a transforming moral power. Then, there is the *objective*, or the relation of the death of Christ, as the organ of the mercy of God, to His government. Thirdly, the fundamental identity of the *subjective* and the *objective* has to be explained, which might be efficiently done by the exposition of Christ's death as a sacrifice. We do not remember ever to have seen the difficult subject of sacrifice treated with sufficient of scientific severity to give entire satisfaction. The subtilty and the moral courage requisite for looking at so profound and momentous a subject with scientific thoroughness are rare qualities. Whose statement, for instance, satisfies on the origin of sacrifice? Neither Magee and his school on the one hand, nor Maurice and his, on the other, appear to have spoken without prejudice, though their opposite prejudices have led to opposite results; nor has either spoken the fitting word on the sacrifices of Cain and Abel, of Noah, and of Abraham, and on the sacrifices of the law of Moses. Then there remains the sacrificial presentation of Christ's death in Old Testament prophecy and in New Testament doctrine. After ages of controversy, the work that shall at once content our hearts and our understandings remains to be written. Mr. Williams's is not that work. It bears marks of haste, and lacks thoroughness. To speak, for instance, of the Father sacrificing Christ, is a verbal inaccuracy, which is at once a sign and an occasion

of inaccurate thought. Although the author distinctly professes his belief in "the substitutionary aspect" of the death of Christ, he rejects the notion, "that the object of it was either to remove legal obstacles, or to satisfy legal justice." We fear that he has been stung to hasty and inefficient utterance by the imputation of heresy. With that we cannot sympathize. A heretic could not have written this book. Not only does it bear marks of deep devotion and reposing reliance, but it contains passages which should be carefully pondered by any who may in future essay the stupendous problem. We commend the book, as the product of a truthful mind, to the thoughtful among the devout and the devout among the thoughtful.

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**FOSTERIANA :** consisting of Thoughts, Reflections and Criticisms, of JOHN FOSTER. Selected from periodical papers not hitherto published in a collective form, and edited by HENRY G. BOHN. London: Henry G. Bohn.

IN the infinite world of deity there is room for the play of perfect thought and perfect deed; plan and execution are equal; in the finite creature, the best thinker and the best worker are usually distinct persons; one passes his life in thought and does little execution; the vocation of another is to realize the visions of the first. Old are the quarrel and the jealousy between them. Yet the communion and mutual dependence of the head and the hand are as real in society as in the individual. The intelligent reader need not be told that Foster the Great was a lord in the sphere of thought. "The present volume of *Ana* consists, almost exclusively," says the preface, "of extracts made from such of the late Mr. Foster's contributions to the '*Eclectic Review*' as have not been already published in the collection, entitled '*Critical Essays*.'" The papers wherein they were found would, for various reasons, be unadapted for republication entire. Yet, thickly scattered, were large nuggets of permanent value. In selecting, arranging, and reprinting, these in a portable and cheap form, Mr. Bohn has done wisely, and has earned the gratitude of all admirers of Foster, whose number will now probably be considerably increased.

**MAN'S DREAMS AND GOD'S REALITIES :** or, Science Correcting Sceptical Errors. By THOMAS RAGG, author of "*Creation's Testimony to its God*," &c., &c. London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans and Roberts.

THE favourable reception which has been given to this author's previous writings will probably prove the best introduction to the present, which is dedicated by permission to the Bishop of Rochester,

The object is most praiseworthy, which is to set forth the fundamental agreement of God's two great revelations, Nature and the Bible. This is attempted, by showing in a popular and brief way the baselessness of certain theories of scientific men, which the writer considers to have an ungodly tendency. He deals in order with astronomical, mechanical, chymical, metaphysical, and mythical theories, all of which he somewhat sweepingly takes as opposed to revelation, and these he demolishes, seemingly with much ease and satisfaction. We do not agree with Mr. R. as to the un-Christian character of all the theories, and we think that to fight the battle of Christianity on the ground of physical science is neither wise nor safe. The book, however, is full of devout sentiment, and has many passages of vigor, some of true eloquence.

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MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE AND LABOURS OF THE REV. SAMUEL MARSDEN, of Paramatta, Senior Chaplain of New South Wales; and of his early connexion with the Missions to New Zealand and Tahiti. Edited by the Rev. G. MARSDEN, M.A. London: The Religious Tract Society.

YARRA YARRA: or, the Wandering Aborigine. A Poetical Narrative in thirteen books. By KINAHAN CORNWALLIS. London: Ward and Lock.

WE associate these books only on account of the relation of both to the antipodes. The first is an edifying and charming account of a true man and a faithful servant of Christ, whose "name is written in heaven," as having labored with energy, self-denial and success, in fields of peculiar difficulty, for the eternal welfare of man. We earnestly commend the volume to Christian ministers.

The river Yarra Yarra flows south-east from lofty inland mountains to Port Philip. It gave a name to the redoubtable black chief who is the hero of this poem, and whose far from Greek lineaments characterize the cover, and tempt the weaker purchaser, as it lies on the railway stall. Feeling our own incompetence, we placed the book in the hands of a friend, whose early years were spent amid the scenery which is sung therein. He considers the descriptions faithful, but neither he nor we can commend this production, either for literary excellence, or for general moral influence, nor admire the public taste which has, it seems, called for a fifth edition. Amid much dreary bombast, there is, here and there, a healthy sentiment forcibly expressed, and there is a spirit of free wild life which has a charm. There is also some valuable information in the notes and the appendix.

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PSALMS AND HYMNS FOR PUBLIC, SOCIAL, AND PRIVATE WORSHIP: prepared for the use of the Baptist Denomination. London: B. L. Green.

PSALMS AND HYMNS FOR PUBLIC AND SOCIAL WORSHIP. Collected and Edited by WILLIAM HOPE DAVISON, Minister of Duke's Alley Chapel, Bolton. Bolton: John Tillotson.

As the hymns which are used in the assembly, in the family, and in retirement, exert an influence, incalculable for strength and extent, on the spiritual life, any wise attempt to raise their character will be hailed by lovers of their kind. That one book is far better than several, and that it was desirable that such a book should be prepared for the use of "The Baptist Denomination," are, in our judgment, axioms. The hymn book before us, which has been so prepared, appears to possess many and great excellencies. It includes *all* those hymns which, in the judgment of the compilers, are requisite for the objects. It strongly resembles, in plan and execution, the new Leeds Hymn-Book which was noticed and described in "The Homilist" last year. But it differs from that most excellent compilation in two respects. It contains a hundred hymns more than the other, and the Psalms, instead of being all placed by themselves at the beginning, as was done there, are here interspersed among the hymns, all being arranged together under proper heads of subject and occasion. Of course those hymns which relate to Baptism have a character which accords with the opinion and practice of those for whom the book is designed. Yet we see no reason why those who baptize infants, should, in their singing on such occasions, regard the ordinance only in reference to the infants, or why they should not use some such as are found here on the general significance of the ordinance. Of course, we except from this remark all such as seem to imply the exclusively adult destination of the ordinance, and we more especially object to some of these which perversely reproduce in verse the old, exploded, misinterpretation of Rom. vi. 3, 4, retained as if in defiance of all just hermeneutics.

Mr. Davison's book contains, however, three hundred and fifty hymns more than the other. It is compiled with judgment and taste, and is well adapted for its purpose.

We should have hailed it as a most hopeful omen for the Church of our time, had all these new hymn-books contained more about the second great command of the Law, and the humanity of the Gospel.

GERMAN EQUIVALENTS FOR ENGLISH THOUGHTS. By MADAME BERNARD. London: David Nutt. This is a skilful and praiseworthy effort to facilitate, on the part of the English, the acquisition of the German language. The talented authoress evidently understands the genius and structure of both languages, and will prove a genial and competent guide to either. We trust that the work will obtain a circulation both worthy of its merits and satisfactory to the writer.



# A HOMILY

ON

## Man in Christ, a New Man.

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“For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”—2 Cor. v. 13—17.

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TO be “in Christ!”—What does this mean? Though it was one of Paul’s favorite expressions, it sounds strange to us. Some professing Christians attach no idea to the phrase; to them it is an empty sound. Others attach to it some mystic ideas which from their very haziness can exert no rational and healthy influence upon the heart and life. What then is the meaning? We can attach only four intelligible ideas to the expression, and from one of these we must take our choice. It may mean, either to be *in His ever sustaining energy*; or, *in His dispensation*; or, *in His affection*; or, *in His character*. Which of these four ideas is the one we are authorized to adopt? Is it the *first*? Does the expression mean to be in Him as the constant Sustainer of our existence? As God He is the ABSOLUTE life, and *in Him* all creatures “live and move and have their being.” But this cannot be the idea, inasmuch as Paul uses it to designate the state of a *particular class* of men;

whereas all men, good and bad, aye, all beings, rational and irrational, live in Him, as the absolute and constant Sustainer of their being. Is it the *second*? Does the expression mean to be in His dispensation? Men have lived under different dispensations; some under the Patriarchal, some under the Mosaic, and some under the Christian. In this sense the Jews were said to be "baptized INTO Moses." But as Paul means here the state only of a certain class of men, this cannot be the idea, since all men now during eighteen hundred years have been IN Christ in this sense;—they have lived under His dispensation. Is it the *third*? Does it mean being in His affection? There is propriety in a man saying of his friend, or a loving parent of his child, "He lives in me. He mingles with all my thoughts, sympathies and plans. Though leagues away he is ever present to my soul. He fills my dreams, he nerves my activities." In this sense men are verily IN Christ. They are in His affections, in His heart. Men are dear to Him. In the sublime solitude of the eternities that are gone the "delights of His thoughts were with the sons and daughters of men." He loved the world and gave Himself for it. He lives, plans, works, and carries on His great universe, for men. Divine though He be, He is a *man*, and in His heart all men live. But true and beautiful as this idea is, inasmuch as Christ loves all men, and Paul is only speaking of *a class*, it cannot be the particular idea which He means to convey by the expression. Is it the *fourth*? Does it mean living in His character? Without figure, we live in the character of others. The principles, habits, and spirit, of other men form the atmosphere in which our own spirits live and move. What are the maxims that rule every department of the world, but elements of character which past ages have bequeathed to us? Some men make *particular* characters, the realm of their own being. They look at the universe through the thoughts and sympathies of others. The soul of the artist lives in the artistic genius of him he makes his great master; that of the pupil in the ideas and mental habits of his admired

teacher. Ever do we live in the characters of the men we most admire and love. The spirit of our heroes, the ideas of our favorite authors,—without trope, do we not live in them? It is so. Taking the human world as a whole we may say that all men in a moral sense live either “in Adam,” or “in Christ.” The unconverted world lives in the moral character of fallen Adam. The selfishness, the carnality, the falseness and the moral atheism, which came into the world through him, form that moral atmosphere which the millions breathe as their vital air.

This is the meaning then I attach to the phrase, “In Christ.” It is to be so thoroughly impregnated with His ideas, so imbued with His spirit, so inspired with His lofty purposes, so charmed and fascinated with His moral beauties, that our spirits live in Him. We look at ourselves and the Creation in the light of His life. We think through His thoughts, feel through His feelings, act through His purposes. This connexion is most vital. Hence the Bible teaches that what the foundation is to the building, the fountain to the stream, the root to the tree, the head to the body, Christ is to the good.

Now he that is so in Christ is a “new creature,” a new man. This man has three things new.—*A new imperial impulse; a new social standard; and, a new spiritual history.*

I. A NEW IMPERIAL IMPULSE. What is this impulse? “The love of Christ constraineth us.” Whether the love of Christ here means His love towards us, or ours towards Him, is of no practical importance. In sooth, the latter involves the former. We could never love Him unless He had first loved us. His love is the flame that kindles ours. Moreover, our love towards Him will take the same aspect of philanthropy towards the world as His. Love transfigures the lover into the spirit of the object. Now this love in Paul’s case became the dominant passion, the imperial force of his being. Wonderful is the power of a strong passion over our

natures. It fires the brain, it stirs the blood, it bends every energy to its own use. This love thus filled and fired the apostle. It *constrained*—pressed, urged, overbore, him. It carried him on like a resistless torrent. It was the regnant impulse,—every thing else was subject to it.

The text suggests two thoughts concerning this new governing impulse:—

First: *It is incomprehensible to those who possess it not.* “Whether we be beside ourselves it is to God, or whether we be sober it is for your cause.” It would seem from this, that the apostle, under its influence, appeared to be *mad* to some of his contemporaries. They were at a loss to know what could induce him to do what he was doing. They saw him brave the greatest perils, oppose the greatest powers, endure the greatest hardships, make the greatest sacrifices; and they could not discover the principle which produced this self-sacrificing conduct. It was not ambition: had it been so they could have understood it; for they saw their warriors hazarding everything for this;—but Paul repudiated power. It was not avarice: this they also could have understood; for they saw their merchants going from one city to another, crossing oceans and islands for gain; but Paul was suffering the loss of all things by the course he pursued. They thought him “beside” himself. The world never has understood the principles that rule the truly good. The world did not understand Christ;—even His own relations considered Him mad. “The world,” says the apostle, “knoweth us not, because it knew Him not.” A man must have the feeling to understand it. Love alone can interpret love.

Secondly: *It arises from reflection upon the death of Christ.* It is not an inbred passion, it is not a blind impulse, it is not a something miraculously transfused into the heart. No, it comes, “Because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead.” The apostle *assumes* that “Christ died for all.” He states it as an admitted fact. Looking upon Christ as a *man*, it is not wonderful that He died. All



generations die. But that He died for others is wonderful. "Scarcely for a righteous man will one die." Moreover, that He should die for *all* is most wonderful. There are some who profess to believe in the Gospel, who would have this "all" blotted out. As it is they restrict it to those they call the elect. But such a restriction is a fearful tampering with the word of God. I would not have this ALL expunged from the Bible for worlds. Take this *all* away and it is no gospel for me. You place the Bible at once out of harmony with nature, whose cardinal provisions are for *all*; out of harmony with the sympathies of all genuine and generous souls, which desire the good of all. "He tasted death for every man." "He gave himself a ransom for all." "He is a propitiation for the sins of the whole world." That all are not saved is no objection. It is suggested by a popular expositor that in material nature much goodness seems wasted. Rain and dew descend upon flinty rocks and sterile sands; floods of genial light come tiding down every morning from the sun on scenes where no human foot has trod; flowers bloom in beauty and emit their fragrance, trees rise in majesty and throw away their clustering fruit, on spots where as yet there has never been a man. Wealth sufficient to enrich whole nations is buried beneath the mountains and the seas, while millions are in want. Medicine for half the ills of life is shut up in minerals and plants, while generations die without knowing of the remedy which nature has provided. It is no objection therefore to the universality of the atonement, that all are not benefited by it. Its benefits one day will be universally enjoyed. There are men coming after us who shall live in those solitary wastes, enjoy the beauty and the light, which now seem wasted, appropriate the fruits, the wealth, and the medicine, which for ages have been of no avail. It will be even so with the death of Christ. There are men coming after us that shall participate of the blessings of that atonement, which generations have either ignorantly rejected, or wickedly despised.

Now the fact that "Christ died for all," seemed to suggest

to the apostle two strong reasons why he should be *zealous* in the cause of Christ.

First: *That the whole world was in a ruined condition.* "Then were all dead," or, then all died. That is, in a moral sense. They are destitute of that love to God which is the very principle of spiritual life. If Christ died to save all, then all needed salvation. This I think to be the argument.\* Paul ascended Calvary and took a view of the world therefrom. He stood by the cross and through its light he looked down upon humanity. And as from the lofty heights in nature palaces and castles dwindle into almost invisible points, so from that eminence all the adventitious distinctions of society disappeared. He saw *all*; the peasant and the prince, the rustic and the sage, the young and the aged, as *dead*. Dead to all that is true and virtuous, lovely and Godlike in the universe. With this view of the world, he felt overwhelmed with the magnitude of his work.

Secondly: *That the principle of self-sacrifice is the binding principle of action.* "He died for all, that they which live should henceforth not live unto themselves." Christ's death was the highest expression of self-sacrifice, and it is only as men imbibe this principle and act upon it, that they can either rightly live themselves or help others to live. Selfishness is the death of the world. "Christ died to destroy it, died so that we should not live to ourselves." In one sense we cannot live for we are all links in "being's endless chain," and we cannot move without influencing others. Yet man seeks to do so, and this is his sin and ruin. This self-sacrificing love displayed in the death of Christ is the only quickening and saving power. He who would help the world must get it and work by it. No other labor is of any service. To live "to Christ" is to live this life, and to live this life is to help the world. Christ's sacrifice must be thus repeated in

\* The late Rev. T. W. Robertson, of Brighton, repudiates this old fashioned notion in his beautiful sermon on this text. We have tried to adopt his novel and ingenious interpretation, but cannot.

every man that would bless others. Thus we are to "fill up that which is behindhand of the sufferings of Christ."

This then is the new reigning impulse which Christianity gives. The "new heart," the "heart of flesh." The world has it not, other impulses rule it: love to Christ is the Christian's royal passion.

II. A NEW SOCIAL STANDARD. "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh: though we have known Christ after the flesh, henceforth know we him no more." The word "henceforth" implies that He did once know men after the flesh; that his conduct towards men was once regulated by carnal standards. The world has a variety of such standards. *Rank, wealth, secular influence*: these are the canons by which it estimates the social state and respectability of men. Such standards, however, Christianity regards as false and evanescent. It estimates man by his righteousness and not by his rank, by his spirit, not by his station, by his principles, not by his possessions. Paul might have said, "I once knew men after the flesh." I knew them as rich or poor, as Jew or Gentile, as learned or illiterate. I know them no more thus. I see them now in the light of the cross,—as sinners dead in trespasses and sin. "Yea, though I knew Christ after the flesh," &c. I once knew Him as a poor, persecuted, generous, devout Jew; I know Him no more as such. I think not of His body but of His mind, not of His worldly condition, but of His unexampled character, not of His station, but of His spirit;—His spirit of reverence, truth, and boundless love. Christianity teaches us to regard men as good or bad—dead or alive to God. The fact, that this is the true standard, serves:—First: *As a test by which to try our own religion.* What is the kind of sympathy we have with Christ? Is it a sympathy with His material aspect and conditions, or with His spirit and aims? There are views of our Saviour's *material* condition adapted to awaken our mere animal sympathies. The babe in the manger, the traveller at Jacob's well, the

dying man on Calvary. Such aspects of Him would awaken our sensuous sympathies, but there is no religion in this. It is not a corporeal Christ in Judea, or even in Heaven, that I am to love, but a Christ in those glorious and Divine principles which are embodied in His word and life. "Say not in thy heart who shall ascend into heaven?" It serves:—Secondly: *To guide us in the promotion of Christianity.* In our endeavors to extend the Gospel and to convert the world, we are not to enquire; if men are rich or poor, high or low, of this country or that; it is sufficient to know that they are *men*, and that they are morally dead. Thus Paul acted. He spoke to rulers as well as to the ruled. It serves:—Thirdly: *To indicate the principle on which we should form our friendship with men.* It should be not on account of their material condition but of their spiritual character. We should cultivate their friendship, not because they have great property, but because they have holy principles; not because they live in fine houses, but because they have noble souls; not because they belong to our class, but because they belong to the great republic of which Christ is the head; not because they are rising in the world, but because they are rising in assimilation to the Great Spirit of the universe. It serves:—Fourthly: *As a rule to regulate our actions.* Paul said, "When it pleased God to reveal his Son in me, I conferred not with flesh and blood." Spiritual considerations not material ones then ruled him; principles not persons became his authorities. When we are ruled in our conduct by considerations of worldly interests, or by the opinions of men, merely because they have secular influence or authority, we judge after the flesh. We should know no men after the flesh, as authorities in creed or conduct; their spiritual excellence should alone influence us.

III. A NEW SPIRITUAL HISTORY. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things have passed away and all things have become new." In what sense can you call this change a "creation?" It is unlike the first and

original creation in many respects. The first creation was the production of *something out of nothing*. It is not so in the moral change which Christianity effects in men. No new element or faculty of being is produced,—the man's essence remains the same : the change is simply in the mode and course of action. When a vessel that has been pursuing her course to some northern port turns directly round and sails to the south there is a change ; but what is the change? Not in the materials or form of the vessel, not in the mariners or in the cargo. The change is simply in the course. It pursues a new destiny, it has new prospects ahead, and it turns the old winds and waves to a new account. It is somewhat thus in the moral change of the soul. The first creation presented *no difficulties*. The Creator had only to speak and it was done, to command and it stood fast ; there was nothing to resist His will. But in this moral change there are resisting forces. "The world, the flesh, and the devil" oppose this moral creation. In the first creation there was nothing but *direct force*. There was no instrumentality ; it was simply the Divine volition. But in this change you must have divine argument, suasion, example : God did not "strive" to create, but He strives to save. The first creation left man *morally insecure*. He was put in Eden but left free to stand or fall. He fell, and thereby exhibited the insecurity of his position. But in this change his safety is secured. "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Compare the mighty temptations which Job and Paul withstood with the weak one before which Adam fell.

Wherein then is the propriety of representing this moral change as a *creation*. There are five points of resemblance :—

First : *In both cases there is the production of something NEW*. What is the new thing imparted to the man who is "in Christ"? It is, as we have said, a new imperial passion ; that passion is love ! An all-absorbing, an all-controlling sympathy with Christ. This passion for Christ is a new thing in the world,—in the universe.

Secondly : *In both cases it is the production of something*



*new by* DIVINE AGENCY. Creation is the work of God: "without him was not anything made that was made." "He only can create." The architect can rear a cathedral, the sculptor can cut forms of symmetry and grace from marble, the painter can depict life on his canvass, the machinist can construct engines that shall serve the nations, but not one of them can create. They work with materials already in existence. They bring existing things into new combinations;—this is all. God alone can create. It is so in this moral change. He alone can produce it. The most resistless logic, the most overpowering eloquence of the most talented man, cannot generate this love in the human heart. "Paul plants and Apollos waters, God alone gives the increase."

Thirdly: *In both cases there is a production of something new according to a* DIVINE PLAN. Everything in the universe is formed by plan. The smallest atom and the most massive orb, the tiniest plant and the most majestic tree, the insect and the seraph, are all constructed on an idea. The universe, as a whole, is an organization fashioned after a model thought. This work in the human soul is also so. "We are his workmanship," says the apostle, "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." "We are predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ." If I believe in the wisdom of God and in any analogy between the material and moral realms of His operations, I am bound to believe in predestination. Conversions, or moral creations, are accomplished by plan. We may not know the plan;—what of that? It may still be in existence, and we unwittingly may be still working it out. The architect has the outline of that majestic cathedral which is in course of building:—very few, if any, know of it; perhaps he has not even sketched it on paper; he has left it in the secrets of his own brain. Still the building under his superintendence is advancing. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, are helping to work his plan. Some are excavating the mountains, and some

are ploughing the seas, some are in manufactories, and some are in markets, some are here and some thousands of miles away. Very few of the numerous workers are known to each other, yet the act of each helps to work out the plan of the architect. So it is in the moral creation. We know not the plan. But all beings under the Great Architect are hastening its accomplishment. Heaven is working, earth is working, matter is working, mind is working, even hell is unwittingly working for it.

Fourthly: *In both cases there is the production of something new which develops the DIVINE GLORY.* The universe is a mirror—a photograph of God. “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth forth his handywork.” This moral change in man, too, develops God’s glory. There is more of His glory seen in the free intellect, the pure sympathies, the lofty aspirations, the refined conscience of one regenerate soul than the whole material universe displays.

Fifthly: *In both cases there is the production of something new, in a GRADUAL WAY.* The Creation itself seems to have been a gradual work. According to geology unnumbered ages were taken up in bringing this earth to its present form as a suitable residence for man. The moral change in man is gradual: man does not become virtuous and great by a bound; it is by a series of efforts and a course of training.

These remarks are sufficient to show the propriety of representing the change which takes place in a man on becoming a Christian as a “creation.” “Old things pass away, and all things become new.” It is not, however, the things *without*, that change. They may remain the same; material nature, society, events that pass over him,—all may remain the same: but the change is *within*. His consciousness is changed, and with that change all has changed. He looks at the forms of the universe with a new eye, he hears its voices with a new ear, he interprets its phenomena with a new judgment. He looks at all through the medium of a new passion, and all assume new phases. If you would have

me admire some fine piece of architecture, or some magnificent painting, inspire me first with a love for the artist. Through the medium of this affection, the building and the painting will shape themselves to me in forms of beauty and touches of grace that are entirely hid from all who have not that affection. The moment we look at the universe through love to Christ, the Great Architect, it becomes new :—the old universe passes away, and new heavens and a new earth appear.

Such, then, is what Christianity does for us. It gives us *a new imperial impulse, a new social standard, and a new spiritual history.*

What a world this will be when Christianity shall have realized its sublime mission ! I rejoice to believe that, that period will one day come. Sin's thunder storms will not always beat on the world,—a celestial calmness will one day settle on its smiling brow. It will not always be tossed about like a vessel in a storm ; it will one day cast its anchor within the vail, and repose on the calm blue sea of Infinite love. It will not always be a chaos. The centre of light is already planted in its moral heavens—the darkness is passing away. and the morning is advancing. The work must proceed. Every conflicting element shall be hushed, every cloud shall melt into sunshine, every mountain and every valley shall smile with life and blossom with beauty. The whole shall grow radiant with the brightness, and resound with the music of heaven. The great God shall look down upon the moral world, as He did on the material, and pronounce all things “good.” Then, as of old, “shall the morning stars sing together and the sons of God shout aloud for joy ;” angels shall plume their golden wings, and cry, “The glorious work is done.”

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# The Genius of the Gospel.

ABLE expositions of the gospel, describing the manners, customs, and localities alluded to by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its WIDEST truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographic, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of scriptural study, but to reveal its spiritual results.

FORTY-THIRD SECTION.—Matt. xiii. 54—58.

SUBJECT :—*Nazarene Prejudice ; or, a Social Sophistry.*

THIS fragment of history has no necessary connexion with any preceding portion of this chapter; it is not therefore necessary that I should remind you of any remarks in connexion with our past exposition of this gospel.

Jesus was now at Nazareth, here called “his own country.” Capernaum was designated “his own city,” because there He spent the largest portion of His public life, and performed most of His mighty works. Nazareth, however, was the home of His friends, and the scene of His early days.\*

\* The Rev. Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, M. A., who himself visited scenes of sacred history, thus describes Nazareth in his admirable work:—

“Fifteen gently rounded hills ‘seem as if they had met to form an enclosure’ for this peaceful basin; they rise round it like the edge of a shell to guard it from intrusion. It is ‘a rich and beautiful field’ in the midst of these green hills—abounding in gay flowers, in fig trees, small gardens, hedges of the prickly pear; and the dense rich grass affords an abundant pasture. The expression of the old topographer, Quaresmius, was as happy as it was poetical; ‘Nazareth is a rose, and, like a rose, has the same rounded form, enclosed by mountains, as the flower by its leaves.’ The village stands on the steep slope of the south-western side of the valley; its chief object the Great Franciscan Convent of the Annunciation with its white campanile and brown enclosure.

“From the crest of the hills which thus screen it, especially from that called Nebi-Said, or Ismail, on the western side, is one of the most striking views in Palestine; Tabor with its rounded dome, on

Here He passed through all the stages of life up to the ripest manhood. Thirty years He seems to have spent amongst its magnificent scenery and rough society in study, toil and worship. Hence He is called "Jesus of Nazareth," and "the Nazarene." It was an obscure place and one of low reputation. It was one of the most disesteemed villages in that Galilee which

the south-east ; Hermon's white top in the distant north, Carmel and the Mediterranean Sea to the west ; a conjunction of those three famous mountains probably unique in the views of Palestine : and in the nearer prospect, the uplands in which Nazareth itself stands, its own circular basin behind it ; on the west, enclosed by similar hills, overhanging the plain of Acre, lies the town of Sepphorieh, just noticed as the Roman capital, and brought into close, and as far as its situation is concerned, not improbable connection with Nazareth, as the traditional residence of the Virgin's parents. On the south, and south-east, lies the broad plain of Esdraelon, overhung by the high pyramidal hill, which, as the highest point of the Nazareth range, and thus the most conspicuous to travellers approaching from the plain, has received, though without any historical ground, the name of the 'Mount of Precipitation.' These are the natural features which for nearly thirty years met the almost daily view of Him who 'increased in wisdom and stature' within this beautiful seclusion. It is the seclusion which constitutes its peculiarity and its fitness for these scenes of the Gospel history. Unknown and unnamed in the Old Testament, Nazareth first appears as the retired abode of the humble carpenter. Its separation from the busy world may be the ground, as it certainly is an illustration, of the Evangelist's play on the word, 'He shall be called a Nazarene.' Its wild character high up in the Galilean hills may account both for the roughness of its population, unable to appreciate their own Prophet, and for the evil reputation which it had acquired even in the neighbouring villages, one of whose inhabitants, Nathanael of Cana, said, 'Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?' There, secured within the natural barrier of the hills, was passed that youth, of which the most remarkable characteristic is its absolute obscurity ; and thence came the name of NAZARENE, used of old by the Jews, and used still by Mussulmans, as the appellation of that despised sect which has now embraced the civilised world.

"It was not to be expected that any local reminiscences should be preserved of a period so studiously, as it would appear, withdrawn from our knowledge. Two natural features, however, may still be identified, connected, the one by tradition, the other by the Gospel



was itself the most disreputable part of Palestine. The reasons for its standing so low in the estimation of the Jews were various. The rough, uncouth, and strange dialect of its inhabitants, and the moral corruptions which reigned amongst them, both of which arose from the mixture of provincial Jews with Egyptians, and other foreigners, who resided there, rendered it a place of odious notoriety. Hence

narrative, with the events which have made Nazareth immortal. The first is the spring or well in the green open space, at the north-west extremity of the town; a spot well known as the general encampment of such travellers as do not take up their quarters in the Franciscan convent. It is probably this well—which must always have been frequented, as it is now, by the women of Nazareth—that in the earliest local traditions of Palestine figured as the scene of the Angelic Salutation to Mary, as she, after the manner of her countrywomen, went thither to draw water. The tradition may be groundless, but there can be little question that the locality to which it is attached exists, and that it must have existed at the time of the alleged scene. The second is indicated in the Gospel history by one of those slight touches which serve as a testimony to the truth of the description, by nearly approaching but yet not crossing the verge of inaccuracy. ‘They rose,’ it is said of the infuriated inhabitants, ‘and cast Him out of the city, and brought Him to ‘a brow of the mountain’ (ὡς ἄφρός τοῦ ὄρους) on which the city was built, so as to ‘cast Him down the cliff’ (ὥστε κατακρημνίσαι αὐτόν). Most readers probably from these words imagine a town built on the summit of a mountain, from which summit the intended precipitation was to take place. This, as I have said, is not the situation of Nazareth. Yet, its position is still in accordance with the narrative. It is built ‘upon,’ that is, on the side of, ‘a mountain,’ but the ‘brow’ is not beneath but over the town, and such a cliff (κρημνός) as is here implied, is to be found, as all modern travellers describe, in the abrupt face of the limestone rock, about thirty or forty feet high, overhanging the Maronite convent at the south-west corner of the town.

“It is needless to dwell in detail on the other lesser scenes of our Lord’s ministrations in the neighbourhood of His early home. Nain, at two or three hours’ distance, in the Plain of Esdraelon, has been already mentioned. The ‘parts,’ or ‘borders’ of Tyre and Sidon are too indefinite to be dwelt upon. The claims of Cana are divided between the two modern villages of that name, the one situated at some distance in the corner of the basin of Sepphorieh, the other nearer in an upland village to the east of Nazareth.” Page 365.

the name of Nazarene stood for a low, ignorant, and uncultured person. The question of Nathaniel, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" was by no means an unnatural one.

We find by reference to Luke iv. 16—30 that Jesus had visited this place before as a teacher. It was on a Sabbath-day, and He entered the synagogue as He was wont to do. The book of the prophet Isaiah was put into His hand, and He opened it, and His eye fell upon that beautiful passage, "The Spirit of the Lord," &c. On that occasion He met with a most unhospitable and cruel treatment. "They were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill, whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong."

Now He visits them again: their enmity towards Him has not quenched His love for their souls. Their proverbial unkindness will not prevent Him from entering into their midst. The Good Shepherd came to seek the lost; the Great Physician to heal the deceased. What was the result of this second visit? One might have thought that a calm reflection upon what He said to them when He stood in their midst, the Almighty power and the benign temper which He then displayed, and the ingratitude and indignity with which they treated Him;—I say one might have thought that such a reflection would have softened them into penitence, prepared them to hail Him to their midst on a second visitation, and to listen with earnestness to every word which He would then pronounce. But was such the fact? No. They heard Him in their synagogue again, and nothing that He uttered could they gainsay. Every word commended itself to all that was intuitive within them. They were impressed with the force, charmed by, and astonished at, the sublimity of His doctrine. But that was all. They believed Him not, and He departed from their midst, without the performance of any mighty works because of their unbelief.

Now it is to the *cause* of this, that I wish to call your attention. What was it that rendered this second visit of

Jesus a failure? What was it that thwarted the gracious purpose of this second mission? What was it that repelled mercy again from their midst, and resisted the Almighty arm of love, outstretched to save? Was it a something local and temporary—an evil which was confined to that age and place; or was it something common to all the depraved generations of our race? It was, I conceive the latter. It was *prejudice*. The prejudice may be expressed in one sentence. *The incompetency of a man of humble rank to teach his neighbor*. The spirit of these Nazarenes may be thus expressed:—Is not this the poor carpenter, the humble mechanic, who has been toiling amongst us for His daily bread. We knew His mother and His brethren; “Whence hath he this wisdom?” He has never had any scholastic advantage; He has never been to our schools; never sat at the feet of any of our Rabbis! What then can this poor neighbor of ours know about souls, and truth, immortality, and God? We must be as well acquainted with these things as He is, and who is He therefore that He should presume to teach us? Now there is, as I shall have an opportunity of showing, a great deal of what is common in all this; it is very much the language of men generally. It is one of those popular *social sophistries* that exercise a most pernicious influence amongst men, and that require to be exposed and denounced.\* Men somehow or other disparage the teaching of their neighbor, especially if he happen to be poor. Poor laboring mechanics,—what can they know?

The passage suggests four things in relation to this *Nazarene prejudice; or, social sophistry*.

I. IT IS REMARKABLY FORCEFUL. The impression which Jesus made upon them was evidently powerful. “They were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this

\* It is our purpose from time to time in future numbers of “The Homilist” to take up and expose some of those SOCIAL SOPHISTRIES, that act as poison to all true and healthy moral sentiment. To uproot these from the social soil, is to uproot the most pernicious weeds.

wisdom?" His doctrines carried their reason and their consciences with Him. They could raise no argument against His position; their moral constitution bound them to approve of the principles which He inculcated. Notwithstanding this, there was a something in them which induced them practically to resist the whole. A something in their minds which, like water, quenched the fire of His doctrines, as it fell upon their hearts; a something in the soil of their natures that destroyed the life of the seed as soon as it dropped into their bosom. What was this something? The stupid prejudice, that *a poor neighbor could not be a great teacher*. This notion, which seems to have been wrought into their souls, prevented them receiving even what their judgment and consciences approved. Though they felt that there was a wonderful teacher before them, the old prejudice soon overcame the impression. Prejudice has always this neutralizing power. In whatever mind it dwells it acts in relation to truth, as alkali in relation to acids, neutralizing its very power. Arguments the most cogent, discourses the most powerful, can be neutralized at once by some prejudice in the mind.

## II. IT IS MANIFESTLY FOOLISH.

First: *Because the merits of a doctrine are absolutely independent of the circumstances of the teacher*. The grand want of man's nature is truth. It is truth that he requires to solve his difficulties, answer his questions, quicken his nature, develop his power, and guide his being. The business of his life ought to be, to "buy the truth"—to "get wisdom." The truth he especially requires is moral—that which refers to duty and to God. Moral truth is the same everywhere, in whatever age it appears, or by whomsoever proclaimed. The truth or falsehood of a moral doctrine is independent of the person who proclaims it. That there is a God, that men should love and serve Him, that there is a hereafter of retribution—these and cognate principles are true. They are as true when proclaimed by the meanest peasant as when

uttered by the greatest prince. As true when proclaimed by the most untutored rustic as when taught by the most learned doctor of Theology. The rational question therefore of every man in listening to the doctrines of a teacher should be, not, Is he a neighbor, or a foreigner? not, Is he scholastically educated or self-trained? not, Has he sprung from the loins of rank, or risen from obscurity? These are mere contingences; but, Is the doctrine *true*? If true, however humble the man, his doctrine has a majesty before which I must bow; if false, however great the teacher, his doctrine I must treat with contempt. It is foolish:—

Secondly: *Because such circumstances, particularly in relation to Christ, were peculiarly favorable to the proving of the divinity of His doctrine.* Suppose two individuals to appear amongst us as teachers of the same doctrine, and that doctrine such as commends itself to our reason; one we shall know as a foreigner, high in rank, well trained in the first institutions of his country, the other shall be one of our neighbors, with whose humble origin and relatives we are well acquainted, and who has never been blessed with any educational advantages. Let both proclaim the same doctrines with the same clearness, propriety, and force—which of these men would it be more rational to regard as connected with supernatural endowments? Would it not be our poor neighbor? In the other case we might refer the man's power to the extraordinary advantages which he had received in his own country. But in this case we could refer it to nothing of the kind. The very idea that such a poor man at our very door should rise up and proclaim doctrines which no sage had ever announced, would, we think, naturally impress us with the fact that the teacher was connected in some special way with God. The very reason therefore which induced these Nazarenes to reject the doctrine, was one which in itself was the most adapted, if they had used their reason, to impress them with its divinity. It is foolish:—

Thirdly: *Because some of the greatest teachers in the world have sprung up from the lowest ranks of life.* It is a physio-



*logical* fact that the muscular exercise which an individual who has to labor for his livelihood puts forth, is conducive to the health and vigor of the brain ; and as is the brain so will be the mind. It is a *social* fact that those who are dependent for their livelihood on their own exertions must employ many of their intellectual and moral powers. In such a case there must be forethought, plan, invention, patience, perseverance, and all these are helps to intellectual development, which the man of opulence and ease has not. Hence we find that it is an *historical* fact, that many of the great teachers of all countries have been for the most part poor. Necessity has urged them onward. Jesus might have reminded these men of their great teachers. He might have pointed them to Elisha, who was taken from the plough ; to Amos, who rose to prophetic distinction from the sheepfold ; and to David, who ascended from the lower walks of life, and become the greatest bard, hero, and monarch of any time.

III. IT IS PROVERBIALY COMMON. Jesus intimates this, "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country." Why is this?—Why is it that the home teacher, especially if he be poor, is so generally depreciated?

First: *Because the defects of a home teacher are more observed than his excellencies.* Our eyes are keen to mark the improprieties of our neighbors, their vices are generally more noticeable to us than their virtues. From this tendency it is not a little that tells in favor of the purity of Christ. None of His neighbors could charge Him with any moral defect. They could not say, Is not this the intemperate, the false, the dishonest? The best of men have their defects, and the nearer we come to them, the more disposed we are to say, "We have seen an end of all perfection." Men whom we have loved and almost worshipped in the distance, have, as we approached them, appeared but men.

Secondly: *Because the home teacher has not the advantage of our imagination.* Imagination will give the stranger a number of fictitious attributes. *His position, attainments, studies,*

*virtues*, are all magnified by the imagination. If he says great things we think him great; wonderful things, we think him wonderful.

Thirdly : *Because the home teacher is more likely to awaken feelings of opposition.* It was so now. *Pride and envy* are evolved. It is humbling and mortifying to vanity to find our own poor neighbor outstripping us in power, merit, and influence. We wish to be the greatest in our own little neighborhood, if possible. Such are some of the reasons which give popularity to this prejudice, and induce men to reject, and even martyr, those of their neighbors, whom the foreigner will praise, and posterity will bless.

#### IV. IT IS LAMENTABLY PERNICIOUS.

First : *It prevented them from believing on Christ.* Prejudice is always opposed to faith. The first thing that Bacon had to do was to eject the various prejudices which he called idols. These are fetters that enslave the intellect, clouds that obscure the vision, bolts that shut out the truth.

Secondly : *Their not believing on Him prevented Divine operations.* It is so in everything. Would the agriculturist have God to perform mighty works on his fields, covering it in autumn with abundant crops? then he *must have faith* in the laws of nature, and in the capacity of his soil. Would the poor man have God to perform mighty works for him, raise him from penury and obscurity to wealth and influence? he must have faith in the principle that "the hand of the diligent maketh rich." Would the statesman have God to perform mighty works for his country? he must, in all the measures he proposes and the laws he enacts, have faith in the truth that "Righteousness exalteth a nation." It is so in everything. "He that hath faith as a grain of mustard seed, shall say unto this mountain," &c. Would you like to know what God has done through faith? Read the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews.

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# Germ of Thought.

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SUBJECT:—*Jesus praying.*

“These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come.”—John xvii. 1.

Analysis of Homily the Three Hundred and Thirteenth.

THE silence which the Evangelists observe upon the subject of our Saviour's prayers is very remarkable. They often indeed mention the fact of His praying: they tell us how He went up into a mountain apart to pray; how, rising up early in the morning a great while before it was day, He went out and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed; how He passed the whole night in prayer to God; but of the scope and tenor of His prayers on these occasions, they give us no account. They were, in the strictest sense of the word, *private* devotions. The garden, the mountain, the desert, the sea-shore, He made His closet; and the burden of His thoughts and feelings in these retired acts of communion with His Father, He seems never to have revealed. The secrecy and reserve in which He thus wrapped Himself are very striking. Even on the Mount of Transfiguration, when praying in the very presence of the three privileged disciples, it was, if not in the silent effusion of His soul, yet certainly in some manner in which they could hold no communion with Him. So far indeed were they from joining in His devotions, that while He prayed they slumbered; and it was only when they awoke from their sleep, that they saw His glory, and that of Moses and Elias who stood with Him. So of the prayer which He uttered in His agony, they have preserved only the briefest fragment, but as much probably as they were able to hear; for He withdrew from them about a stone's cast, interposing between Himself and them a distance which permitted them to catch only a few of His expressions: and hence it was that, upon His return to

them, He found them sleeping from weariness and sorrow. Occasionally, it is true, He gave utterance to an expression of thanksgiving in their hearing ; as upon the return of the seventy, and at the grave of Lazarus ; but His words were very few, and at that time would be scarcely comprehensible. It seems, indeed, and it is well worthy of remark, that often and earnestly as He might pray *for* them—and that they were the objects of His prayerful solitudes, He himself assured them—yet it was never His practice to pray *with* them. Forcibly as He inculcated upon them the necessity of prayer, and strong as was the encouragement He gave them to united prayer, He seems never to have joined in their private devotions, nor ever permitted them to join in His.

To some, perhaps, this may have a startling sound ; for the Commentators upon Scripture, one and all, so far as we are acquainted with them, suppose and assert the contrary. They have assumed it as a fact without any hesitation. It seems never to have occurred to them to doubt it ; but they have hastily taken it for granted, as a matter of course, that He mingled in the private and social worship of His disciples, just as, in obedience to the law, He joined in the services of the Temple and the Synagogue. If, however, you will search the Gospel for yourselves,—and it will be well to examine them with an especial reference to this one point—you will not be able to find a single hint from which it may be inferred that such was His practice ; but on the contrary, everything to lead you to conclude that the fact was as we have stated it, and that He neither suffered His disciples to pray with Him, nor ever joined in private prayer with them. And of this we have a striking evidence in an incident related by St. Luke in the eleventh chapter of his gospel, which opens thus:—“And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.” They had come upon Him as He was engaged in retired devotion ; and not venturing to interrupt Him, but keeping reverentially at a distance, they

waited till He rose from prayer, and then, impressed with what they had witnessed, distinctly requested Him to teach them to pray; evidently implying that this was a thing which He had not hitherto done, and intimating too, by their reference to the conduct of John, some little surprise that He had not long since done so.

Now, had it been His practice to pray *with* them, His prayers would obviously have been instructions to them in praying, so that they could scarcely have come to Him and asked Him to *teach* them to pray; and the simple fact, therefore, of their making such a request, seems clearly to show us that this had never been His habit. Had He indeed been accustomed to pray with them, how different would have been His answer! We can imagine the tone of mild reproof with which He would have replied,—You ask Me to teach you to pray! And is this then the effect of all our joint devotions! Have all My prayers been so lost upon you, that you now desire further and more explicit instructions? Instead however of answering them thus, He immediately complied with their request, and gave them as a model upon which to frame their petitions, the prayer which we call by His own name, “The *Lord’s* prayer,” and which He had previously in His sermon on the mount, commended to the multitude as an example of the style and manner and spirit of acceptable prayer.

But this was not a prayer which He Himself could use. It was very different from the prayer contained in the chapter before us; different in its tone, different in its spirit, different in its scope and the nature of its petitions; different as earth is different from heaven, or as the human nature is different from the Divine. “When *ye* pray,” say, “Our Father which art in heaven,” &c. Acknowledge your dependence, confess your sins, supplicate forgiveness, deprecate evil and the evil one, and ascribe to God the glory of all. But when *He* prayed, “He lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy son that thy son also may glorify thee:



as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him, And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth : I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Obviously, He that could address Himself to the Father in this strain of confident appeal, must have been characterized by some high and wonderful peculiarities ; peculiarities not merely of office, but of person and nature ; peculiarities which must have kept Him immeasurably distinct from the ignorant and erring creatures that surrounded Him, and which will afford us a satisfactory reason why He never joined in their devotions, nor permitted their intrusion upon His.

What indeed of that community of want and feeling, which is implied in the very idea of social prayer, could there have been between Himself and them ? With their prejudices and misconceptions too, their hopes and wishes grovelling upon the splendor of an earthly monarchy, how could they enter into fellowship with Him, whose views and aspirations were all so far removed from theirs ; so pure, so unearthly, so sublime ? Pray *for* them He might, but to pray *with* them—to unite with them in the utterance of common wants and common desires, was infinitely incompatible with His purity and perfections. He could *teach* them to pray ; He could enlighten them as to the true nature of their wants ; He could inculcate upon them the desires they ought especially to cherish, and instruct them in the manner in which those desires should be uttered ; but He had no imperfections to lament ; He had no trespasses to acknowledge ; He had no forgiveness to supplicate ; and when therefore He rose into high and holy communion with His Father, His prayers could be no model for theirs—into His devotions they could not enter.

Had our Lord, indeed, been merely a man, however eminently He might have been gifted, or however officially distinguished, yet as a man, one of our own faulty and imperfect species, no reason can be assigned or imagined, why He should not have enforced His precepts by His example, and prayed with His disciples, just as He admonished them to pray with one another. His wants and necessities would all have been of the same kind as theirs ; He would have had His imperfections to confess just as they had theirs, though His might have been less numerous and less flagrant than their own ; He would have stood in precisely the same need of pardon and mercy and grace as they themselves ; so that it is impossible to conceive any reason why He should have thus held Himself aloof. Take however the great fact that man as He unquestionably was, He was at the same time ineffably more,—the only-begotten of the Father, mysteriously uniting in Himself both the human nature and the Divine, sinless humanity and essential Divinity,—and His conduct becomes intelligent and consistent. We can immediately see that the humiliatory language which it behoves us, as frail and erring creatures, to employ in our addresses to the Divine Majesty, must have been infinitely inappropriate to Him ; and that humbled though He was to the condition of humanity, His devotions must have been in a strain of the most elevated, endearing, confidential communion ; communion which none but Himself could enjoy—Himself, the only-begotten and well-beloved of the Father.

At the close, however, of His ministry, when the great crisis was at hand for which He had all along been preparing the minds of His disciples, He in some measure threw aside His reserve ; and as a last and emphatic expression of His love and concern for them, admitted them to a degree of intimacy with which He had never yet privileged them. He had been unbosoming Himself to them in a manner the most affectionate and confidential ; He had apprised them of the sufferings He was immediately to undergo ; and to console them under the trouble and perplexity into which they were

thrown by the announcement of His approaching death and departure, had given them the promise of the Comforter, who should be an ample compensation for the loss of His visible presence. He had told them distinctly, so distinctly as to dissipate all their doubts upon the subject—"I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world : again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." In order therefore to confirm them in this belief, to heighten their apprehensions of the mysteriousness of His nature and the dignity of His person, and to strengthen their confidence both in His solicitude, and in His ability to do for them all that He had promised, He condescended, not indeed to pray with them, but to *let them hear Him pray* ; to pour out the fulness of His soul in audible prayer and intercession before them, so as to discover to them at once the thoughts and feelings with which His heart was laboring, and the confidence and the intimacy, with which both in His own behalf and theirs, He could approach the throne of Heaven, and hold intercourse with the Supreme. "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come !"

Confining our attention to these few words, we may observe in them much that is striking.

In the simple *action* itself, His lifting up His eyes to heaven, there was an intensity of feeling, an absorption and elevation of soul, a something which so deeply impressed the mind of the Evangelist, that sixty years afterwards, when he was writing his gospel, it seems to have risen upon his memory with all the freshness and vividness of a yesterday's observation. And well it might. We, indeed, who "are of the earth, earthy," we naturally and involuntarily lift up our eyes in humble acknowledgment of Him who is higher and the highest ; but oh, the retrospective and anticipative yearnings of His upward gaze, who Himself came down from heaven ! How He would lift up His eyes to the heaven from which He came ! Sensibly indeed, He beheld no more than we do : the same magnificent and wonderful expanse with which we are so gloriously canopied ; but oh ! the vision

of His soul, His intense realization of the invisible, as abstracted from things around, all His human faculties, sense, thought, feeling, will, all were concentrated and absorbed in the ascension of His soul to Him, to whom He could appeal and say, "Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world!"

The action too is the more striking from the contrast presented to it by His deportment in the garden, where, in the heaviness and agony of His soul, instead of lifting up His eyes to heaven, He "*fell on his face*, and prayed".\* Trembling and shrinking under the apprehension of that burden which He had undertaken to bear, His posture was that of the humblest and most dejected suppliant; but here, where He is entering into filial communion with the Father, and acting as our Advocate and Intercessor; contemplating the covenanted results of His sacrifice, and anticipatively sprinkling His blood upon the mercy-seat, His manner, while full of that reverence which became His mediatorial inferiority, bespeaks also that elevated and generous confidence, that calm and trustful assurance of the divine love and fidelity, which became the ineffable relation between the Father and Son. "He lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come!"

In remarkable consistency with this are the perfect *simplicity and freedom of His address*—"Father!" There is no accumulation of majestic titles and epithets; nothing like the tone of profound adoration which pervades the Psalmist's prayers, and the prayers of holy men of former times; no prostration of spirit; nothing to indicate that sense of infinite disparity which breathes and must breathe in our addresses to the Divine Majesty: nothing of this humiliating character; but simply, *Father!* an appellation expressive of the closest relation, the tenderest endearment, the most affectionate familiarity. It is true that in the prayer which He instructs us to use, He bids us also address God as our

\* Matt. xxvi. 39.

Father ; but then it is with the very significant addition, "Our Father *which art in heaven*," bringing immediately before our minds all the immensity of the interval between heaven and earth, between God and man. But He, who could say of Himself, "Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in me?" He, whom the voice from heaven acknowledged and proclaimed—"This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased," *He* has no such sense of inferiority to depress Him into humility, or to impose awe upon His spirit ; but calmly and confidently He appeals to His love, in language expressive of identity of essence and community of nature. "*Father*, the hour is come !"

You will observe too, that though addressing God in the very presence of His disciples, He does not say *our* Father ; which would have been to include them in this act of communion, to place them on the same level with Himself, and to identify their relation to the Father with His own ; but He simply says, "Father ;" implying the peculiarity of His Sonship, and observing the same distinction between Himself and them, as that to which He seems to have referred when He said, "I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."

In other parts of His prayer He varies the style of His address, and appeals to the Father in language suited to the peculiar nature of His requests. Thus, when praying for His disciples that they might be kept from the corruptions of the world, He calls Him "*Holy*" Father ;" importing that the influences by which they were to be sanctified and preserved proceeded from Him ; and at the close of His prayer, when appealing to His Father's justice, as the ground on which He rests His intercession and presents His claims, He designates Him "*Righteous* Father:"—"O Righteous Father, the world hath not known thee : but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me." But here, where He is pleading for Himself alone, alleging His completion of the work which had been given Him to do, as casting Himself upon His Father's love and fidelity, His language is that



of the most confiding affection and the sublimest familiarity —“Father, the hour is come!”

Precisely the same thing is observable in the deep significance of His allusion to the great crisis which was at hand: “Father, *the hour is come!*” What hour He says not; He refers to it simply as *the* hour, in a manner that implies as clearly as anything can, their *common* knowledge of the coming event, in all its terrible circumstances, and all its stupendous import. The mystery which had been hid from ages and generations was no secret to Him. He knew His hour. It had been determined and set apart in the councils of eternity, when He lay in the bosom of the Father; and all the arrangements of creation, all the procedures of Providence, all the dispensations of grace, every successive event, every antecedent hour in the world’s history, the eternity of the past and the eternity of the future, had reference to it. Prophets had predicted it, but *they* knew it not. By “the spirit of Christ which was in them,” they had foretold its coming, but they knew not what it imported. Their inspiration only roused them to a solemn curiosity, so that they “enquired and searched diligently, what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.” But *He* knew it. He *knew* it. From the beginning He had been looking forward to it. He had held it constantly in His view. “I have a baptism,” said He, “to be baptised with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!” It was emphatically and peculiarly *His* hour; the hour for which He had come into the world. And now it was at hand. Its awful shadows were gathering and falling upon His soul. Now, therefore, in the distinct anticipation of all that was prepared for Him, and in precisely the same spirit in which He had formerly asserted that “No man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son,” “He lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, *Father, the hour is come!*” How, in what possible language, could He have more plainly intimated the mutual

confidence of the Father and the Son ;—the community of their knowledge, their purpose, their determination ? How manifest, that as the Father knew the Son, so the Son knew the Father ; that each was, so to speak, in the secret of the other ; and that the crisis to which He referred was one, in which the feelings and solitudes of both were alike centred !

In conclusion.—We have said that one reason why our Lord uttered this prayer in the hearing of His disciples was, that by discovering to them the confidence with which He could address Himself to the Father, and the nature and fervency of His feelings for them, they might repose an implicit faith in His love and His intercession. And what they saw and what they heard they have recorded for our instruction, that we might have fellowship with them, and repose in Him the same faith. Look then above ! Lift up your eyes to heaven, and behold Him, the Son of Man, at the right hand of God, ever living to make intercession for us ; ever living to appear for us as our Representative and Advocate with the Father, and to claim for all who come unto God by Him, pardon and acceptance, and all the unimaginable blessedness which He came down from heaven to purchase for us ! Behold Him there, our Friend, our Brother, laboring with the same love for us, which He felt for His disciples when on earth, and waiting for our petitions that He may Himself present them to the Father, heightened with the emphasis of His own intercession ! Realize this in your constant thoughts. And oh ! the hope, the confidence, towards God which such a faith inspires ! When we think of Him there—Him who so loved us, Him who so graciously and constantly taught us to call His Father our Father, and encouraged us to present our petitions in His name, under the assurance that whatsoever we should ask the Father in His name, He would do it for us ; when we think of Him, no longer in His humiliation lifting up His eyes to heaven, but glorified with the glory which He had with the Father before the world was, with what confidence may we too lift

up our eyes, and address ourselves to the Father ; with what boldness may we come before the throne of grace, assured of obtaining mercy, and finding grace to help us ! And this is what we all want, and want continually. Young and old, it is the grand necessity with us all. We may indeed be at present insensible of our exigency, but the time is not far off when we shall feel it in all its force. Oh ! when that solemn period shall arrive, and the shadows of death shall be falling upon us, to be able calmly and trustfully to lift up our eyes to heaven, and having received the adoption of sons, to say, "Father, the hour is come !" Happy that last hour, come when it may, if but this may be our confidence towards God ! And this, we all know, is the very feeling with which Almighty God would have us all regard Him ;—as our Father, our heavenly Father ! He would have us look up to Him, not merely as His creatures but His children ; not merely as servants but as sons ; not with a sentiment of slavish dread, but with a cheerful confidence and a generous affection. For this it is that He hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son, that from His gracious inspiration in our hearts, we may say, "Abba, Father !" And for this purpose too it is, that He, who "is not ashamed to call us brethren," still pleads for us on high ; for this it is that He, who when He was on earth lifted up His eyes to heaven, now that He is in heaven looks down upon earth, to see whether this filial heart be forming in us, to aid its advances, and to strengthen its growth ; that our love being "made perfect, we may have boldness in the day of judgment." Gracious solitudes ! Let them not, for Christ's sake, let them not be disappointed !

J. H. SMITH, M.A.

MILVERTON EPISCOPAL CHAPEL,  
*Leamington.*

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## Questions of the Creator to the Creature.\*

(No. I.)

SUBJECT:—*The Insignificance of Man as a Creature.*

“Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?”—  
Job xxxviii. 4.

Analysis of Homily the Three Hundred and Fourteenth.

“THE voice of God; or, Questions of the Creator to His Creatures,” is the general subject which I have selected for a few Homilies. This subject implies two facts,—the clear and devout recognition of which will rightly introduce us to the various themes which will fall under our notice as we advance through our intended series.

First: *That God has made special communications to man.* “God who in sundry times and divers manners spake in times past.” That this Book is the word of God is not with us an open question. Its *congruity* with all collateral history, with its own contents, with the character of God, with the *a priori* reasoning, the aspirations, judgment, and spiritual wants of humanity, has long since transferred this question from the region of debate into the realm of our most unquestioned axioms, and settled beliefs. Taking the fact therefore as one of the settled grounds of thought, it impresses us with two facts:—*The wonderful condescension of the Infinite mind, and the distinguishing glory of the human soul.* Is it not wonderful that He to whom the universe is as nothing, and whose nature is so holy that He charges the

\* This series of Homilies is now in course of delivery. The whole are as follow:—I. The Insignificance of Man as a Creature. II. The Position of Man as a Sinner. III. The Responsibility of Man as an Agent. IV. The Folly of Man as a Worker. V. The Importance of Man as a Wreck. VI. The Recklessness of Man as a Self-Destroyer. VII. The Vanity of Man as a Thinker. VIII. The Indolence of Man as a Servant.

unfallen angels with folly, should condescend to address a single thought to insignificant and corrupt man? "When I consider thy heavens the work of thy fingers," &c. But while the fact thus shows the wonderful condescension of the Great God, it also shows, *the distinguishing glory of man*. In what do I feel the highest glory of my nature to consist? Not in the power to analyze the elements and to ascertain the laws of this stupendous universe; not in the power to press nature into our service, make its oceans bear our fleets, its lightnings waft our thoughts, its steam chariot us as on the wings of the wind; not even that we are *immortal*,—for matter, perhaps, is indestructible; but in the fact that we have the capacity for taking in the thoughts of God. The fact that He speaks to us implies that we have a power to understand what He says. This is thy glory O man! It shows that thou hast a nature in some measure like His. There are creatures on this earth that are superior to thee in many points;—in magnitude of frame, in strength of limb, in distance and clearness of vision, in celerity of motion, in beauty of form, in gracefulness of movement, there are many creatures that excel thee; but none of them can even talk to thee, none of them can take in thy thoughts, and appreciate thy reasonings: but thou canst take in the thoughts of God. Thou art therefore, in a sense, nearer to the infinite than the highest creature on earth is to thee. There is a deeper and wider gulf between the lion or the eagle and man, than there is between man and His Maker. Man reverence thy nature!

The other fact implied in the general subject of the series upon which we are entering is:—

Secondly: *That man should pay special attention to these special communications of God*. Would Infinite Wisdom do that which was unnecessary? Would He in such divers ways and on such numerous occasions make the special communications which constitute this book, were it not of the utmost importance for him to study? "Come now let us reason together, saith the Lord," &c. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh from heaven."



Under a suitable impression of these two facts, let us now proceed to our text. "Where wast thou?" &c. These words you are aware were addressed by the Almighty to Job out of the whirlwind. Job had carried on a long discussion with his three friends, who from a wrong theory of the divine government, had formed a wrong judgment of His character. Elihu had spoken and uttered many beautiful things about the universe and its God; and now God Himself to settle the controversy, comes in the pageantry of the storm, and speaks in the thunder of the whirlwind. "Who is this that darkeneth counsel?" &c. The moral of this whole sublime communication appears to be this,—Be concerned Job rather for *a moral trust in my character, than a theoretical knowledge of my ways*. For what canst thou know intellectually of my ways? "Where wast thou?" &c.

This question suggests the insignificance of man in the presence of His Maker; and in order to impress this thought upon our hearts we shall adopt a somewhat paraphrastic method of treatment.

I. WHAT IS THINE INTELLECT TO MINE? "The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth, by understanding hath he established the heavens, by his knowledge were the depths broken up." He laid the foundations of this earth according to plan. Contrivance is seen in everything; in the most vast and in the most minute,—the proximate and the remote. It is a machine in which the minutest pin has its power, and in which all the parts equally fit and work together. It is a great body in which all the members play their proper part, and harmoniously conduce to the good of the whole. It is a magnificent edifice every part of which displays the most perfect architectural skill. Lift up your eyes on high, survey this terraqueous globe beneath your feet;—the whole existed once in the intellect of God, existed as the building in the mind of a perfect architect. He had no assistance in the formation of this plan, there was no counsellor to instruct Him, there was no one of whom He could take know-

ledge. What is thy intellect to His? Thou man of pride, boasting of thy intellectual power and attainments, stand forth. How small are thy knowing faculties to His! Thine intellect is only as a dim ray to the great central light of immensity. How limited is thy sphere of knowledge to His! Thine eye can only see the outside of a little speck in the universe: He sees through all. How short thy time for getting knowledge to His! Thou art only of yesterday and can know but little; He was before all things; He has seen the rise and observed the progress of all things great and small.

II. WHAT IS THINE AGE TO MINE? "I laid the foundations of the earth." When was the foundation of the earth laid? The Mosaic record gives us to understand that it has been, what it now is, a habitation for man for nearly six thousand years. But geology teaches that the earth was in existence millions of years before this. It takes us back over unnumbered ages until the imagination is lost in the abyss of time. But however far back in the ages that are gone its history may take us, it had a beginning; and there was one, and but one that laid its foundation-stone. If we cannot reach the distant period when the foundation was laid, Who shall tell the age of Him that laid it? Tell me how many drops of water compose the Atlantic, tell me how many sand-grains make up old ocean's shore, tell me how many atoms compose the Himalaya mountains; put the drops and sands and atoms together, and let each figure in the mighty sum stand for centuries:—those centuries would not equal the age of the Eternal Alpha. The mountains are old; but "before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth or the world, from everlasting to everlasting thou art God." These heavens are old; but "the heavens are the work of thy hands."

What then is our age to His? "Mine age is as nothing before thee." "In the morning we are like grass, that groweth up, in the evening we are cut down and withered."

"Our days on earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding." Vain child of an hour, wilt thou argue with this Eternal One?

III. WHAT IS THY POWER TO MINE? "I laid the foundations of the earth." There was none to help. He did the whole Himself. What power was that which piled up the mountains, and poured forth the oceans? What power was that which formed out of nothing this earth, rounded it, hung it upon nothing, linked it by an invisible, but mighty, cord, to those suns and systems which the same Almighty hand had made? Ye vain men who glory in your strength what are you? Worms crushed before the moth. Sinner stand in awe of this power! Remember that in every sin thou art challenging it to crush thee.

IV. WHAT IS THY INDEPENDENCY TO MINE? "I laid the foundations of the earth." He is therefore:—

First: *Independent in being*. He lived before the universe was,—lived alone; lived when creation was but a thought in His own Infinite intellect. But man where is thy boasted independence? He existed without thee or the universe:—neither can exist without Him. Nay the very earth is more independent than thou. It existed countless ages before thou camest; its oceans rolled, its rivers flowed, its valleys smiled, its mountains rested their heads in the sunshine, the earth yielded its fruits, the cattle browsed in the meadows, and the birds sang in the heavens, when there was no man. The earth can do without thee, my brother, but thou canst not do without it. God can do without either.

Secondly: *He is independent in action*. It was with Him and Him alone to determine whether He should lay the foundation of a universe or not. If He determined to do so, it was with Him to decide, moreover, what kind of universe it should be;—what its dimensions, forms, elements, and existences. Nay more, it was with Him to determine whether

thou shouldst be or not, and if He thought meet to create thee, He had to choose what kind of existence thou shouldst have, how much brain and heart and being; who should be thy parents; in what clime, and in what age of the world's history thou shouldst be born, and what class of circumstances should surround thee from the cradle to the grave. Thy "times" were "in His hand." Talk no more of thy independency, man! Where wast thou when He laid the foundations of the earth?

This subject serves:—

First: *To rebuke all disposition to pronounce an opinion upon the ways of God.* What captious questions the sceptic is everlastingly propounding:—questions about the introduction of sin, the reign of wrong, the suffering of innocence, the tardy march of Christianity. To all such questions we have one answer:—"Who art thou that repliest against God?" What is thy intellect to His, what is thy experience to His, what is thy sphere of observation to His? Where wast thou when He laid the foundations of the earth?

This subject serves:—

Secondly: *To suggest that our grand effort ought to be to cultivate a loving trust in the divine character, rather than to comprehend the divine procedure.* To comprehend Him we never can. "Who by searching can find out God?" &c. He will always be the Infinite Unknown. But even a child can trust Him. To trust is natural and easy; and the greater, the truer, the kinder, the holier the being, the more easy the trust. "Trust in Him therefore that liveth for ever."

This subject serves:—

Thirdly: *To enable us to appreciate the glorious service of Christianity.* The question, "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?" confounds and crushes me. I feel powerless before it, it overwhelms me with a sense of my own insignificance. I feel that God is too great to notice me; that my existence is only that of a wretched atom to be tossed about by the furious winds, or trodden down by the iron heel of resistless fate. Before this voice of God I am all dark,

I tremble in horror with the feeling of my own nothingness. Blessed be His name! Christianity comes to my relief. It tells me that although I am insignificant, I am still a child, a beloved child of the Everlasting, and that it is not the will of my Father that any even of His "little ones" should perish; nay that it is His good pleasure that I should have a kingdom. It speaks to me in tones of inspiring, bracing, uplifting, music: "Let not your hearts be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my father's house," &c. Like the force which links the floating atom to the sun, the cross, the blessed cross binds my poor spirit to the heart of God.

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(No. II.)

SUBJECT:—*The Position of Man as a Sinner.*

"And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?"—Gen. iii. 9.

*Analysis of Homily the Three Hundred and Fiftieth.*

As the geographical position of Eden is clouded in what would seem an impenetrable mystery, its physical loveliness is mercifully left to our imagination. Who would have a scene crowded with such sublime associations brought into the mere territorial realm of geographical description? If we have not sufficient poetry in us to make it a place of transcendent beauty, let us look at it through the imagination of the Great Bard of Paradise.

"It was a place

Chosen by the sovereign Planter, when He framed  
All things to man's delightful use: the roof  
Of thickest covert was inwoven shade,  
Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew  
Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side  
Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub,  
Fenced up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower,



Iris all hues, roses, and jessamine,  
Rear'd high their flourish'd heads between, and wrought  
Mosaic; under foot the violet,  
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay  
Broider'd the ground, more colored than with stone  
Of costliest emblem."

Ever memorable Eden! though unknown to science,  
linked for ever to the memories and sympathies of mankind!

Here man appears in three distinct and deeply interesting aspects:—*In a state of normal perfection, in the very process of falling, and in moral ruin as a sinner.* Nowhere else, on earth, do we see man standing erect in the image of his Maker;—perfect in body, intellect and heart. The scene in which he is placed is exquisitely fitted to him, and he to it. Has he a material nature with animal impulses and wants? Here he finds on every hand a rich banquet for his appetite, an elysium for his senses, a sphere of health and exhilarating exercise for his muscles and limbs. Has he reflective powers? He is in a splendid scene of symbolized thoughts. Every object challenges enquiry; every impression startles intellect. Has he a conscience, is he solicitous about the will of his Maker? He has a test the most simple in its nature, the most easy both to comprehend and obey. Has he a love of power, a desire to rule? All things are put in subjection to him. He is enthroned as the lord of all. Has he social sympathies? He has a companion who reciprocates all the kindly and friendly impulses of his heart. Has he a religious nature? His God appears to him by signs and speech, his Eden home is vocal and radiant with the Divine. In the cool of the day, amidst the fresh evening breeze, after the hours of labor, his Maker appeared to him for special communion. How noble and how happy was our nature in Eden! Its heart throbbed in unison with all that was true, its sympathies flowed with the Infinite, it sounded a rich note in the music of a jubilant universe. But alas! man in honor abode not. From his lofty pedestal he falls.

And here in Eden we see the *falling process*. Evil which had been prowling about the creation ages before, enters this scene in its most insidious form. It approaches our nature ; it attacks it on the womanly and the weaker side. It appeals to taste, curiosity, and ambition, the most excitable impulses in the female heart. It does this when the woman was alone. She yields, and also became the successful tempter of her husband. Evil triumphs and our nature falls.

Oh *what* a fall was this !  
 A fall that shook the world,  
 And shattered souls by millions.

But here, in Eden, you have not only man in his normal perfection, and man falling, but you have him in *actual ruin*. Here he is, smitten with remorse, burning with shame, overwhelmed with terror, fleeing from his Maker.

In this state he is arrested by the divine question, "Where art thou?" This question implies three things :—

I. A CHANGE IN MAN'S MORAL POSITION. "Where art thou?" Thou art not where I placed thee, where I was wont to find thee. Thou art not in thy calm attitude waiting for me. No, his one sin brought guilt upon his conscience, and anarchy into his heart. This developed itself *in a dread of God*. "I was afraid." "They hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden." They hurried to some dark and retired recess that they might conceal themselves from God, or rather God from themselves. What made them afraid? Was there anything in the Divine character or dealings to rouse this terror? The reverse. There was everything in the nature which He had given them, in the scenes of beauty and blessedness in which He had placed them, and in His constant intercourse with them, to inspire their utmost confidence and love. It seems monstrous to be afraid of One so good in essence and in action as He. Guilt is the cause of the fear. A guilty conscience robes the Father of Infinite Love with the terrible costume

of an avenging Judge. It makes cowards of us all. Sinful man has always been afraid of God. Jacob thought Bethel "dreadful" because God was there. Moses hid his face for fear of God. Manoah thought that God would "kill" him. Men have always felt a desire to do what Adam did, hide from the Great One. They would sooner any one appear to them than He, sooner hear any one's voice than His. Any indication of His approach—a strange body in the heavens, a strange sound in the air, a strange vibration in the earth—fills them with alarm.

This dread of God accounts for innumerable evils in the world:—

First : *It accounts for all malignant theologies.* If I fear a man, let that man be ever so kind in heart, so amiable in spirit, so estimable in character, he will seem to me malignant and repulsive. It is so with God. What horrid ideas men have formed of Him ! In heathendom, He appears in ten thousand forms an object of infinite horror. His malignant nature can only be propitiated by the torture, blood, and anguish, of His creatures. But why go to heathendom ? Look at home, read some of your theological works, and hear some of your popular preachers, and what horrid ideas of God you will discover. There are men in Christian England, as it is called, who have turned the glory of the Infinite Father into the image of an arbitrary despot,—an avenging monarch, a Moloch.

I rejoice to believe that the god of some of your popular preachers is not the God of the universe. He is the ghastly creation of a guilty conscience and a weak brain.

Secondly : *This dread of God accounts for Atheistic Speculations.* If I fear a person I have no wish to think of him. On the contrary, the thought of him will always be unpleasant ; and I shall seek to banish it whenever it stealthily enters the heart. Because men dread God they do not like to retain Him in their thoughts. The language of their hearts is, "Depart from us we desire not a knowledge of thy ways." Your atheistic systems, if systems they be called, are the produc-

tions of fear. As Adam and Eve used the trees in the garden, so Atheists use their thoughts,—to shut out God. Their work has ever been to plant in the wilderness of our sinful life, thought-trees, whose thick and well-foliaged branches shall conceal their Maker from the eyes of men. “The fool hath said in his heart, (his terror-struck heart) There is no God.” Atheism has its root in fear. You will never remove it from the world by your logic. Love is the only force.

Thirdly : *This dread of God accounts for the prevalence of depravity.* Supreme love to God is the fundamental sentiment, the moral substance, of a virtuous character. There can be no virtue, no moral excellence in the creation without it. But where God is dreaded, He cannot be loved. The being you fear, you hate, you oppose, you would destroy, if you could. What you fear, you antagonize. The pestilence, the serpent, the lion, the despot :—Who would not crush these ? Hence men are at enmity with God, and this is the prolific source of sin.

Fourthly : *This dread of God accounts for the absence of a hearty enjoyment of life.* Who can enjoy the countless gifts of Providence, that regards the donor with dread ? Who can brave the ills of life with magnanimity and look forward to its end with peace, who regards the author with dread ? The dread of God will take away the poetry, the music, the sweetness of life. “Fear hath torment.” It fills the world with furies and the soul with horrors.

Fifthly : *This dread of God accounts for the little religious interest men feel in the works of nature.* Some feel no interest in nature, others feel a mere commercial interest in it, others feel an artistic or scientific interest in it, but how few feel a religious interest in it ; regard it as the product, the mirror, the organ, of the Infinite mind. If I fear an artist, I care not for his pictures, if I fear an author, I feel no interest in his work. If men devoutly loved, instead of servilely fearing, God, how beautiful nature would appear to them ! The painting and the poem of a much loved father, how interesting to the child !

Such are some of the legion-evils arising from that dread of God which arose in a man on changing his moral position.

The question "Where art thou?" implies :—

II. A DIVINE INTEREST IN MAN NOTWITHSTANDING HIS ALTERED POSITION. God did not leave him, as He had fallen angels, to descend to ruin without any effort to restore. He sends *His* voice after him, that voice *walks*,—travels in the cool evening breeze,—follows him into the shadowy recesses whither he had fled, and startles him with the interrogation, "Where art thou?" A question put not of course for information, but for restorative suggestion. Now the divine interest which gleams in this question for man in his sinful state, is displayed in the most glorious way in the provision which in the gospel He has made for man's recovery. What does that recovery require? Manifestly the removal of this dread which drives man from his Maker and produces the evils that afflict the world. How can it be removed?

First: *By a revelation of Himself suitable to disarm man of this dread.* What revelation must God make of Himself in order to expel this prince of demons from humanity? Would a revelation of Himself in all His *absolute glory* do it? No, this if it could be borne by mortals would only raise the terror to a more overwhelming degree. Would a revelation of Himself through angelic natures do it? Poets and painters represent angels as charming creatures: the cherub is a lovely babe, the archangel a beautiful woman. All have countenances which beam with sentiments which enchant the heart; their forms are exquisite symmetry; they travel on wings streaked with celestial lustre. But this is all imagination. This is not true to man's moral conception. An angel is a terrible object to human nature. Angels when they have appeared to men have always evoked the utmost terror. Men feel like Eliphaz,—their flesh creeps, their bones tremble, and their hair stands erect with horror. The mariner may sing of "The sweet little cherub that dwells up aloft,"—but were



that sweet little cherub to show his face, no tempest that could beat on his barque would awaken more panic.

How then? The Eternal to disarm man of this terrible fear comes to him in man's *own* nature. Are you afraid of a babe? Go to Bethlehem and see that infant, type of beauty and innocence, before whom the Magi are bowing with mysterious reverence. God is in that lovely babe. Are you afraid of a beautiful, frank, benign, pure-minded boy? Go into the market-place of Nazareth and see Him playing at marriages and funerals with the best, and most kindred in spirit, of his young neighbors. God is in that charming boy. Are you afraid of a poor but honest, amiable, and noble-minded young man? Go into the carpenter's shop at Nazareth and see Him earning His daily bread by the sweat of His brow. God is in that right manly young man. Are you afraid of a Teacher who, free from all assumption of superiority, scholastic stiffness, and pedantic utterance, mingles with the crowd, and utters truth the most lofty to the imagination, the most reasonable to the intellect, the most real to the conscience, the most inspiring and ennobling to the heart? Transport yourselves in thought to the mountains of Capernaum, and the shores of Galilee, and listen to Him who speaks as "never man spake." God is in that Teacher. Are you afraid of a philanthropist the most tender in heart, the most earnest in affection, the most race-wide in sympathy? Follow Jesus of Nazareth during the three years of His public life as He goes "about doing good." Count the diseased that He heals, the hungry that He feeds, and the disconsolate that He comforts. See Him at the grave of Lazarus, and giving back from the grave the beloved brother of Mary and Martha. See Him arrest the funeral procession at Nain, and restore to the broken-hearted widow her only son. See Him on the Mount of Olives raining tears on the apprehended doom of Jerusalem. Him in Gethsemane suffering for others, and on the Cross dying for others; and with His dying breath praying for His murderers. God is in that dear philanthropist.

Thus in Christ, God comes to man to disarm him of all dreadful thoughts about Him. Amidst man's wildest storms of terror and apprehension, He comes to him in Christ, and says in tones—

“Mild as when Zephyrus on Flora breathed,”

“It is I, be not afraid.” “Let not your heart be troubled, neither be afraid.” Thus “God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.”

Not only does He disarm man of fear by this human revelation of Himself; but :—

Secondly: *By a provision to remove guilt from the conscience.* Guilt is the source of fear. A guilty “conscience makes cowards of us all;” yes, and the source of something which is, if possible, even worse than this fear—*self-shame*. Our progenitors displayed this now. “The eyes of them both were opened, and they knew they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons.” They were ashamed of themselves, not because they were without raiment, for they had always been so, but because they were without innocence; they felt that they had lost their moral beauty. Sin invariably brings self-shame, which is one of the most agonizing of emotions. To be ashamed of self, to burn with blushes at one's own self, to loathe, reprobate, damn, one's-self, this is hell. What provision has the Great God made to remove this? Raise another question which will answer this: What in the nature of the case is required? The cause of the guilt, whence spring this dread and shame, must be removed. Selfishness, carnality, undevoutness, rebellion against God. These are the causes of guilt, fear, and shame. The Gospel removes this. It destroys the “old man with its corruptions and lusts,” and restores to the soul the image of God. And more, it forms a glorious relationship between the soul and the Infinite, that becomes a source of glowing and triumphant exultation. “We glory in tribulations: also knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope

maketh not ashamed ; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost." What interest then has He displayed in these provisions ! He removes the fear and the shame. In this question is implied :—

III. THE IMPORTANCE OF MAN FEELING HIS MORAL POSITION. "Where art thou ?" Bethink thyself—What hast thou done ? Where art thou standing now ? Whilst deception on this matter is the most serious of all deceptions, there is a greater tendency in man to deceive himself on this point than any other. The Rev. John Caird, in his admirable volume of Sermons, has a most masterly discourse on SELF-IGNORANCE. He refers the tendency to self-ignorance to four facts :—to the fact that sin can be truly measured only when it is resisted ; that sin makes man afraid to know himself ;—that sinful habits and dispositions are acquired, in most cases in a slow and gradual way. And to the fact that as character gradually deteriorates, there is a parallel deterioration of the standard by which we judge of it.

It is important then for every man to make an earnest and determined effort to understand his moral position,—to ascertain whereabouts he is in relation to God and Eternity. "Where art thou ?" Art thou living amidst lawless passions and delusive hopes and vain imaginations ? if so, thou art in a dangerous position. Things may seem to thee fair and beautiful ; but thou art like a man sporting upon the breasts of a volcanic mountain about to burst. The sky is clear and the breeze is balmy, and the scene around is clad with verdure and beauty ; but beneath thy feet there are subterraneous fires, gathering new energy every moment, fires which will soon rive the spot whereon thou standest, and engulf thee. "Where art thou ?" Is the breath of Mammon thy inspiration ? Are fortunes and fashions thy great things in life,—thy chief good ? if so, thou art "walking in a vain show ;" thou art heaping "up riches, and knowest not who shall gather them." Thou art making an immense mistake in life.

Brother, Do you hear this question ? I do not ask, Do you hear the outward sound ? for God's language to the soul is not sound—but silence. In profoundest silence His voice is heard, if ever heard. Hush, hush ! Now, amidst the shadows of this holy night, as in the cool breeze of Eden's day, Do you not hear that question ?—"Where art thou ?"

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(No. III.)

SUBJECT :—*The Responsibility of Man as an Agent.*

"What doest thou here, Elijah ?"—1 Kings, xix., 9.

Analysis of Homily the Three Hundred and Sixteenth.

THE history of Elijah is a history of the marvellous. The facts of his life throw the boldest fiction of romance into the shade. The two ends of his mortal life,—his introduction to, and departure from, the world, are sublimely strange. As in the case of Melchisedec, we have no account of his father or mother, or early days. So dark is the mystery that hangs over the origin and first periods of this man's life, that we are left free to the conjecture that he came into the world at first in that cloudy chariot which bore him off at last. Most, if not all, the acts and events of his life were marvels. His first recorded words broke like thunder on the ear of his country. Confronting Ahab, the proud and idolatrous monarch of Israel, he said—"As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." He was fed by miracle. Ravens bore him bread, and the barrel of meal and cruse of oil supplied him, the widow of Zerephath, and her son, for "many days," without decreasing a particle in quantity. He delivered the son of his widowed friend from the cold grasp of death, and gave him back to her bosom with renewed life and vigor. On Carmel's brow, single-handedly he confronted the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal ;

and confounded them by bringing supernatural fires to consume his sacrifice. He sealed up the clouds for three long years ; and then he prayed and the heavens gave rain.

There is more of the human and the frail of Elijah in this chapter before us than we can discover anywhere else. Here he appears a man "subject to like passions" as ourselves. His godlike courage and his wondrous zeal forsook him. The bold prophet, the heroic champion of heaven, the intrepid reformer, is now the child of desponding thoughts and enervating fears. Having fled from the threatened vengeance of Jezebel, the wife of Ahab the king—a miserable woman, he reaches Beersheba, the extremity of the kingdom of Judah, and there sits down in utter despair under a "juniper tree," requesting for himself, that he might die. "It is," said he, "enough ; now, O Lord, take away my life ; for I am not better than my fathers." Thence he proceeds in the same depressed state unto Horeb, the Mount of God, and there, sick of the world and tired of life, he enters a cave. There, I have no doubt, in silence and solitude, he hoped to breathe out an existence which had become intolerable. In this case the voice of God comes to him in this question,—*"What doest thou here, Elijah?"*\*

The master-thought contained in this question seems to be *man's responsibility*. "What doest thou here?" I am thy Lord and Master—thou hast no right here without consulting Me. I demand a reason for thy conduct.

Did we consider it needful fully to argue out the doctrine of man's responsibility, which we do not, we should dwell at considerable length upon several facts which I shall only briefly state.

First : *The fact that man has all the primary conditions of responsibility*. Were the question put,—what must any creature possess in order to render him accountable to God for his actions ? Our answer would be, a threefold capability :—*a capability to understand, obey, and transgress*, the Divine

\* The way in which God brought him out of the cave has already engaged our attention. See "Homilist," Vol. VI., p. 285.



will. If a creature has not the first,—the power to understand what his Maker requires of him, he could not in equity be held responsible for not rendering it. Brutes and idiots therefore are essentially irresponsible. The second,—power to obey, is equally indispensable. Though a creature may be made acquainted with the Divine will, yet if he has not adequate capability for its fulfilment, he could no more, in justice, be held responsible for not obeying, than the idiot or the brute who has not the power of knowing it. Power and obligation are lines of precisely the same length. The third,—power to transgress, is as necessary as either. Unless a creature has the power to disobey, there is no freedom or virtue in his obedience. He moves by a force over which he has no control, and is no more responsible for his conduct than the billows or the breeze. Now has man these three primary elements of responsibility? Has he the first? Has he the means of ascertaining the will of God concerning him? He has: all have nature, reason, conscience, by whose light they can learn that it is their great duty supremely to love and serve their Creator;—and some in addition to this have the Bible. There is not a sane human being who has not the power of obtaining a knowledge of the Divine will. Has he the second,—the power of obeying? Who will say that man has not the natural power to be honest, truthful, kind, devout;—the power of reverencing greatness, esteeming excellence, gratefully appreciating kindness? This is the totality of his obligation. As to the third,—his power of transgressing; this is, alas! too much displayed in the everyday history of every man to question for a moment. Man, then, has all the elements of responsibility, and if he is not responsible, he is endowed with powers for no purpose.

Again, were it our purpose fully to argue out this doctrine we should dwell upon the fact:—

Secondly: *That man has a deep consciousness of his responsibility.* What mean our self-reproaches on the commission of wrong or our neglect of duty,—our compunctions and remorse? What means our inward satisfaction, when the wrong

has been resisted, and the right pursued, when duty has been followed and when righteous deeds have been wrought? These emotions imply the underlying consciousness of our responsibility. Were we the mere creatures of outward forces, or of inward impulses, could such emotions exist?

Furthermore we would refer :—

Thirdly : *To the fact that society deals everywhere with men as responsible.* A locomotive rolls its crushing weight over a man and kills him ; a billow dashes against a frail barque and buries all on board in the mighty abyss ; or a wild beast tears to pieces a human being ; has society the same feelings towards that engine, that raging billow or beast, as it has towards that man that has just murdered his brother? No, there are in the last case as in none of the rest, popular denunciation and vengeance. It is felt that justice has been outraged, and that the destroyer is to be dealt with as a criminal. All the arrangements of society are based upon the principle that its members are responsible.

Yet once more we might refer :—

Fourthly : *To the fact that the Bible everywhere teaches it.* It is implied in all its appeals to the undecided. “Choose you this day whom ye will serve.” It is implied in its allegations against the sinner. “Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.” It is implied in its representation of the judgment-day. “God shall bring every idle word into judgment.” “Be not deceived ; God is not mocked : for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” Indeed the very existence of the Bible implies it.

But why even hint at an argument in favor of man's responsibility? Why do it? There are men, it is true, who insist that “man is the creature of circumstances.” I grant, indeed, that there are persons in human form who are the creatures of circumstances ; but they are unworthy the name of men. A man is only a man when he masters circumstances and turns them to his own advantage ; when he uses them as the skilful mariner uses the winds and the waves to help him on his destiny. The universal consciousness of men is against

this dogma. I am conscious that I am free and responsible; I defy all logic to destroy the consciousness of my freedom. Consciousness is the highest, the ultimate, authority. The mightiest arguments against consciousness are only as the breathings of the zephyrs against the granite hills. However mighty may be the circumstances that bear me on a given course, I feel that I can reverse my movements if I please. If I am not able to change the current of outward events, I feel that I can brave and breast it, and make its breeze and billow bear me to the destiny I seek.

The text suggests three things in relation to man as a *responsible being*.

I. THAT THERE IS A GREAT DANGER OF HIS BECOMING DISPIRITED IN THE PHILANTHROPIC DEPARTMENT OF DIVINE SERVICE. There are two branches of divine service;—the devotional and the benevolent. The former consisting of divine meditations, communings, and adorations; and the latter in benevolent efforts to ameliorate the woes and to improve the condition of mankind. The former is *piety*, the latter is *philanthropy*. These two when genuine are essentially united; the latter is the necessary effect, expression, and evidence, of the former. If a man loves God, he will love his brother also; and if a man does not practically love his brother, you have conclusive evidence that he does not love his God. “Whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?”

Now, whilst perhaps it is not likely that a good man will get disheartened in the department of pious exercises, it is certain that many do get disheartened in the philanthropic. It was the case with Elijah now. He had worked manfully and earnestly to reform, elevate, and serve, his countrymen; but the little apparent good effected, and the coldness, the ingratitude, and even the opposition, he met with from those for whom he was sacrificing his ease, comfort, health—all so depressed him that he resigns his labors and retires to the

solitude of a cave in the wilderness. What man, who from the sacred principle of self-denying love, has labored for mankind, who has not felt the same?—has not often felt his spirit sink within him, and a resolve to give up the work? Moses, Jeremiah, and even Jesus, the God-man, are all examples. He is supposed to have said, "I have labored in vain, and spent my strength for nought." Every true worker in the cause of human reform and happiness has often felt an impulse to abandon his work and to flee to some cave of solitude and silence!

"Oh! for a lodge in some vast wilderness,  
Some boundless continuity of shade,  
Where rumor of oppression and deceit  
Of unsuccessful or successful wars  
Might never reach me more. My ear is pained,  
My soul is sick, with every day's report  
Of wrong and outrage with which earth is filled."

II. THAT WHENEVER COMPETENT TO LABOR HE IS NEVER JUSTIFIED IN QUITTING THE FIELD OF USEFULNESS. "What doest thou here, Elijah!" That question breathes reproof. Hast thou left thy sphere of usefulness because thou canst not discover results equal to thy expectations? Thou art not a judge of results. Thou canst not tell what processes of useful thought and feeling are going on in the minds of the men thou hast been addressing. Souls work silently and invisibly. The seed thou hast deposited in thy garden may be so long in making its appearance that thou mayest consider that it has rotted, but germination is silently going on, and it shall rise to a majestic tree when thou art in thy grave, and the memory of thy name lost in the abyss of ages. Besides wert thou a judge of results—results are not laws to regulate conduct. Thou wilt be judged at last, not by the effects of thy actions but by the motives that have influenced thee. A life of devout philanthropy is binding on thee, even should all thy efforts go for nothing. Or hast thou quitted thy post from fear? Has the threat of Jezebel terrified thee? Art thou afraid of persecution and death?

This argues thy want of confidence in me. In duty, thou art safer in the midst of a million foes, than in granite castles a delinquent.

Of all men, the good man is the last that should seek retirement from public life. Let Ahab, let Jezebel, let all the devotees of Baal go to the cave, the world will go on better without them; but, Elijah, it cannot spare thee. The better and nobler a man, the more public he should be. Caves if you like, for your flatulent foppings, for your gross voluptuaries, for your sordid worldlings, for the immoral and the impious, but the open field for the true, the honest, and the Christian.

III. THAT WHEREVER HE MAY BE HE IS SUBJECT TO THE DIVINE INSPECTION. There was an eye that followed Elijah step by step from Carmel to Beersheba—and from Beersheba to Horeb, and saw him enter the cave;—it was the eye of God.

Man, from the necessary limitation of his finite nature, overlooks the particular in the general, the minute in the vast: and he sometimes so measures, so degrades, the infinite as to suppose that He does the same. Hence there are not a few who, not only disbelieve, but deny, and even ridicule, the notion that the Great One marks and superintends the private history of individual men. My erring brother wilt thou deign to weigh a suggestion or two which we throw out in passing hastily on. *Is it not nonsense for thee to associate the ideas of "Great" and "Small" with the Infinite intellect?* Are not these terms merely *relative* having no meaning whatever but to *limited* natures; and varying even with the relative capacity of these natures? What is great to one creature is small to another, and the reverse. The tiny leaf is a universe to the insect, it is scarcely noticed by thee. The globe is a stupendous object to man; in the estimation of an angel it may be only as an atom in the sunbeams of immensity. But to suppose those gradations of estimation in the Infinite is absurd.

"He sees with equal eye, as God of all,  
A hero perish, or a sparrow fall."



Or as Cowper has it—

“He gives its lustre to an angel’s wing,  
And wheels his throne upon the rolling worlds.”

We suggest again:—*Whether taking the universe as a whole there can be anything “Great” or “Small.”* Is not the creation as truly an organized whole as is the human body? and science shows that you may say of the former, with as much emphasis as of the latter:—“God hath set the members every one of them as it hath pleased him;” and even, “those members which seem to be more feeble, are necessary.” What is the ocean without its drops? what is the body without its members? what is the universe without its littles? Created nature as a whole is a vast concatenation, of which every atom is a link. The roll of the infant’s marble shakes the massive globes of space, and in the moral realm the breath of an infant soul may reach the heart of the most distant seraph. Mrs. Browning has beautifully said—

“I think this passionate sigh, which, half begun,  
I stifle back, may reach and stir the plumes  
Of God’s calm angel standing in the sun.”

We suggest again:—*Whether there is not as much evidence of God’s interest in what you consider the “Small” members of the Creation as in the “Great.”* The Entymologist will give you as sublime a description of the Divine interest displayed in the structures and movements of his microscopic worlds, as the Astronomer can of the Divine interest displayed in the stupendous systems which engage his attention. We suggest yet once more:—What in the world of human affairs, do you consider “Small” and “Great?” That feat in artistic skill which swells the tide of commerce; that campaign which changes the relative position of empires; the discovery of that tract of country which adds a million acres to the possession of the civilized world;—these you say are “great things.” Their occurrence is trumpeted on every breeze the world over; they stir with wonder and gratulation the heart of empires. But stop,—

What produced these? These are but bubbles on the stream of life, blown by the breath of thought. The greatest events in history are traceable to the suggestion of some lonely thinker. The thoughts of one obscure man, like Pascal, Milton, or Foster, may have a sublimer influence upon the universe, than the joint actions of a whole generation. Yet what so "little" as thought, in the estimation of the millions.

Until these suggestions, my erring brother, are duly pondered and their absurdity exposed, I shall hold fast to the doctrine, that God as truly superintends the minute as the vast, the individual as the race, the parts as the whole. "His eye is ever on me;" "I cannot flee from his presence:" He has numbered the "very hairs of my head." "I know all the fowls of the mountain." Yes, and blessed be Thy name. Thou knowest too "The way that I take, and when thou hast tried me, thou wilt bring me forth as gold purified in the fire."

Hark then to this question of the Creator: "What doest thou here?" O brother man, What art thou doing here on this beautiful earth, in this privileged era in the world's history? What art thou doing with nature, with the strength which its fruits give thee, and the impression that its landscapes and its skies make on thy heart? What art thou doing here, with thy fellow men, with thy soul, with thy Bible, with thy God! With all these thou art doing something, but what? Remember that all the actions of thy necessarily active being must be either agreeable or otherwise to thy Maker and Judge. Remember that all thy actions must either be a blessing or a curse to the universe. Remember that all thy actions will be reproduced in thy own experience. No solitary act terminates with its performance. Each act is a seed that shall multiply its own kind for ever; a drop which colors and swells the stream of an everlasting existence; an impulse that will never expend its force, but shall tell on the ages of an interminable future.

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SUBJECT:—*The Bright Light in the Cloud.*

“And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds.”—  
Job xxxvii. 21.

## Analysis of Homily the Three Hundred and Seventeenth.

THIS chapter is the conclusion of Elihu's fourth and last speech to Job. The design of the whole of his argument is to indicate the character of God in His dealings with mankind. This he does by showing that such is the wisdom He has displayed in the creation and management of the world, that men ought to repose the utmost confidence in Him.

The moral of the whole is, that as we cannot “find him out” we should reverence and trust Him as the all-wise and just.

I shall take the text to illustrate *the disposition of men to look upon the dark side of things.*

I. THE TEXT WILL APPLY TO THE SCEPTIC IN RELATION TO THE DARK THINGS OF REVELATION. These men in looking at the Bible “see not the bright light that is in the clouds.” They see the clouds, and through the unbelief of their heart, these clouds blacken and spread until they cover the whole firmament of revelation. No star breaks through their impervious mass, no ray brightens the fringe of their sable robes. That there are clouds hanging over this Book it is far more Christian to admit than to deny. Not a few of the historical discrepancies, and recorded utterances and doings of God, are clouds to me. Notwithstanding the explanations of talented critics and able theologians they still continue;—no breeze of argument has yet borne them off. There are men, of course, to whom this Book has no mystery; they can explain everything—it is “reading-made-easy;” and they would brand as dolts or infidels those who thus frankly

acknowledge their ignorance. Albeit, we must be candid, and confess that the Bible to us contains "things hard to be understood." We feel with Paul, when he said—"How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out!"

But thank God though we see the clouds, the clouds which the sceptic sees, we do not see them like him. We see a bright light upon them. Every one is silvered with celestial beams.

There are several things which give the darkest of them a bright light.

First: *There is the love of the Infinite Father.* This shines through all its pages. Even His denunciations and judgments are but modifications of His love. They are but His breath cleansing the moral atmosphere of the world. His love lights up every sentence and sparkles through every cloud.

Secondly: *The unspotted holiness of our Great Example.* The Bible records sad deeds of enormous wickedness, and defects, even in those it represents as the saints of God. This is a cloud. But the character of Him, it represents as our Great Exemplar, is without a spot. His excellencies radiate through all. They are a bright light upon the cloud.

Thirdly: *The provision He has made for our spiritual recovery.* Whatever else you may doubt there is no room to doubt the freeness, the abundance, and the efficacy of redeeming grace. This is a bright light upon the cloud.

Fourthly: *The existence of a blessed immortality.* Whatever difficulties you may have, you can have no difficulty with this. "I am the resurrection and the life," &c. "I would not have you ignorant, brethren," &c. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be," &c. Immortality is a bright light upon all the clouds of revelation. So long as I see these bright beams upon the clouds of revelation, I am not anxious about them. I could not live under a firmament of clear burning azure. The clouds give variety and interest to the scene;—they soften and cool the brilliant and burning rays.

II. THE TEXT WILL APPLY TO THE FACTIOUS FAULT-FINDERS OF GOD'S PROVIDENCE. Some people are everlastingly musing on the difficulties of providence. (1) The permission of moral evil is a cloud. (2) The apparent disregard of God to the moral distinctions of society is a cloud. "All things come alike to all." &c. (3) The power which wickedness is often allowed to exercise over virtue, is a cloud:—chains, dungeons, stakes. (4) The premature deaths of the good and useful are a cloud. We feel these clouds;—we feel that "clouds and darkness are round about him,"—that "his way is in the sea, and his path in the great waters, and his footsteps are not known."

But there is a bright light upon these clouds. The belief that they are *local, temporary, transitional*, is a bright light upon all the clouds. I look up on them as they roll over me, and feel that they are not universal, that they are mere vapor-spots on the great sky of being; that they are not eternal—they are only of the other day; and that they are only introductory to a higher state of things. Out of their darkness and confusion will one day come a beautiful system. "Our light afflictions which are but for a moment," &c.

III. THE TEXT WILL APPLY TO THE MISANTHROPIC IN RELATION TO THE CHARACTER OF THE RACE. There are men who have gloomy and uncharitable views of the character of mankind. All men are as corrupt as they can be—virtue is but vice in a pleasing garb—benevolence is but selfishness in disguise,—chastity is but lust refined,—and pure religion is but superstition and hypocrisy. Every man has his price—increase your offer, and he who is most famed for virtue and godliness, will fall. All men "are worldly, sensual and devilish." Very dark indeed are the clouds which these men see hanging over society; there is no ray to relieve their darkness.

Now, our view of society is anything but cheering. The longer one lives, the deeper he enters into the inner circles



of life, the more he feels its hollow-heartedness, its miserable selfishness. Still we see bright light upon the clouds—there is not unmitigated, unrelieved, corruption. There is the light of *social love* which streams through all the ramifications of life. It is seen in the unwearied attention and ministries of the mother; in the anxious toils and labors of the father; the tenderness of the sister, the attachment of the brother, the oneness of the husband and wife, and the sympathy of the neighbor. There are countless acts of quiet and self-denying philanthropy in every circle, especially, perhaps, amongst the poor, where they pass unobserved and find no account. It is seen in the showers of tears that fall every day on the graves of departed friends. All this shows that bad as the world is, there is a fountain of love in its heart whose streams are everywhere. This love gives a bright light to the clouds of depravity that hang over the moral world.

There is a light of *moral justice* which flames forth when the right and the true are outraged. There is the light of *true religion*. Though there is an immense amount of hypocrisy, formality, superstition, and cant, associated with the Church of God, there are nevertheless multitudes of true and genuine disciples of the great Christ. There are men who are throwing on society the right thoughts, putting forth the right efforts, and breathing to Heaven the right prayers. These men are destined to multiply; their influence is destined to grow, their principles are destined to triumph. As these men increase, the light upon the cloud will brighten, until at length the whole shall melt into sunshine.

IV. THE TEXT WILL APPLY TO THE DESPONDING CHRISTIAN IN RELATION TO HIS EXPERIENCE. There are hours in the experience of many of the good when all within is cloudy. The proneness to fall into sin, the coldness of our devotional feeling, the consciousness of our defects, the felt distance between our ideal and ourselves, sometimes bring a sad gloom over the heart. "We walk in darkness and have no light."

But there are bright lights, however, upon this cloudy experience. In the first place, the very feeling of imperfection indicates something good. Unless there was light on the background you could not see the clouds. "Blessed are the poor in spirit," &c. "Blessed are they that mourn," &c. The more we feel the dangers of our road, the more earnestly should we grasp the hand of our guide. In the second place, most of those who are now in heaven once felt this. Jacob, David, Job, Paul. In the third place, Christ is ready to help such as you. "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd," &c. "Come unto me all ye that are weary," &c.

From this subject we learn :—

First: *To cultivate the habit of looking upon the bright side of things.* There is a light upon all the clouds connected with our mortal history. There is a world upon whose dark, stormy, battling clouds no ray of light descends. Not so with us. Let us cherish that faith in the improvability of our nature, the purpose and the power of Christ to help our world, and the future perfection of the race, which will cheer and give us heart in all our efforts. Let the clouds roll and thicken over us, I know that there is sunshine in the sky of human life:—let me believe in it.

Secondly: *To anticipate the world of future light.* Yet a little while and the clouds of ignorance and error shall pass away. "What we know not now we shall know hereafter." "Now, we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face." Yet a little while and the clouds of doubts and fears, which roll over our spirits and depress our hearts, shall be dispelled by the glory that shall be revealed within us. Yet a little while and the clouds of sorrow and suffering shall melt into the sunshine of infinite love.

Ye sceptics! I see the dark shadows that rest upon many portions of this Book of which you complain, and often have I shivered under their frowning forms and chilly breath; but I look up and see a bright light on the clouds; the darkest is silvered round with eternal truth and infinite love. Ye factious fault-finders with the providence of God! who, like

your prototypes in the wilderness, are everlastingly murmuring at the ways of heaven, the sky of the divine government is not as dark as you suppose;—there is a bright light on every passing cloud. Ye gloomy misanthropes, who have lost all faith in your species, and can see no good in human character, but evil in all! the heart of humanity is not so hellishly dark as ye imagine. Human thoughts and human feelings, though clouded with error and wrong, have still their rays: there is a bright light in the clouds. Ye desponding Christians, who, amidst the dark memories of past sins, and the depressing consciousness of present imperfections, often weep beneath the dark shadows of self-criminating and self-suspicious thoughts, take heart! there is a bright light in the clouds—

“The clouds ye so much dread are big with mercy,  
And shall break with blessings on your head.”

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SUBJECT:—*Pharaoh and Moses; or, Contrasted Characters.*

“And Pharaoh said unto him, Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more. And Moses said, Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face no more.”—Exodus x. 28, 29.

Analysis of Homily the Three Hundred and Eighteenth.

I. IN THIS WORLD OFTEN THE WORST OF MEN COME IN CONTACT WITH THE BEST OF MEN. It was so on this occasion. (1) Pharaoh was an idolater, Moses a true worshipper of the true and living God. (2) Pharaoh was the greatest of tyrants, Moses the meekest of men. (3) Pharaoh was a signal monument of God’s displeasure, Moses an object of God’s highest favor.

Such opposite characters as these come in contact in families, in schools, in political, as well as in social, circles. Pharaoh and Moses belonged to the same family,—received their education at the same university—had to do with the laws of the same country,—and had met on the occasion referred to in this chapter to discuss a most important religious question.

So in our own days we may find two children, as opposite in their characters as Pharaoh and Moses were, playing on the same hearth at home, sitting at the same desk solving the same problem at school, and having arrived at the age of maturity, discussing the same political or religious questions on the platform or through the press.

II. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE WORST OF MEN MAY COME IN CONTACT WITH THE BEST WITHOUT BEING AT ALL BENEFITED. The intercourse which Pharaoh had with Moses had a tendency to confer upon Pharaoh inestimable blessings.

First: *Think of the noble example which Moses set before him.* The *disinterestedness*, the *meekness*, and the *holiness*, of Moses ought to have made a deep impression on Pharaoh.

Secondly: *Think of the important truths which Moses taught him.* He taught him the very essence of true religion. (1) The existence of one true God in opposition to the idolatry of Egypt. (2) That this world is under the control of God. The elements are under His control,—men are under His control. (3) That Pharaoh was accountable to God. (4) That God was ready to forgive those who had rebelled against Him.

III. WHEN THE WORST OF MEN COME IN CONTACT WITH THE BEST WITHOUT BEING BENEFITED, THE PARTING IS DEEPLY AFFECTING. It is not necessary that the wicked in person should be separated from the good in order to make the parting really affecting; no, they may live under the same roof, be engaged in the same business, attend the same place of worship, and yet what is most serious in this parting, have taken place already—the parting of their minds and sympathies. Pharaoh and Moses parted. (1) When there was no necessity for it. (2) To meet with two different ends: Red Sea,—Pisgah. (3) Never to meet again.

J. G. ROBERTS.

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SUBJECT:—*The Divine Authority of Conscience.*

“For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another.”—Rom. ii. 14, 15.

Analysis of Homily the Three Hundred and Nineteenth.

THE text asserts two things—that the heathen are law to themselves without the law of revelation, and that their conscience either accuses or excuses, approves or condemns them.

From the text we infer the *Reality, Originality, and Universality* of conscience. The *first* may be proved from inward experience, history of man, moral philosophy, and the word of God. The *second* from the fact that it is not the result of education, nor of the deduction of reasoning. The *third* follows from the second; for in that it is original in man, it is therefore *universal*. Conscience has a divine authority, *i.e.*, it is appointed to work according to the design of God. It has its peculiar power and destiny. It is the faculty with which man has to do with duty and with God. The divine authority of conscience acts in three ways.

I. AS A DISCRIMINATING POWER. Man by means of his conscience discovers the reality of moral law, and determines his character according to that law; a law which does not depend for its existence on man's character, but is *absolute—universal—eternal*.

II. AS A BINDING POWER. It tells us that we are under *obligation* to God's law. If we would realize law, we must live in harmony with that law. We must have an *eye* to see it. “Blessed are the *pure* in heart, for they shall see God.” Conscience declares that there is a law, and also produces *con-*



*sciousness* of obligation. Our obligation is based on *relationship*—(to God, self, society, and the inferior creation.)

III. AS A JUDICIAL POWER. Conscience binds by the law, and judges by the law. When in its *right* position, it judges both internal and external actions. The way to have states and committees *right*, is by bringing consciences into *right order*. Conscience as possessing *judicial* authority may be viewed in two aspects ;—as a *witness*, and as a *judge*. It is the great executive power of the soul. The sentence it pronounces is, “guilty, or not guilty.” The subject should lead us :—(1) To humiliation before God on account of the wrong state of our consciences. (2) To “the blood of sprinkling,” that they may be purified, rectified and restored. (3) To “walk in newness of life.”

Ἀνθρώπος.

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SUBJECT :—*Man in Heaven.*

“They cast their crowns before the throne.”—Rev. iv. 10.

Analysis of Homily the Three Hundred and Twentieth.

FAR am I from pretending to the power of explaining this book. The preacher who is anxious to crowd his church has only to announce a series of lectures on this portion of sacred writ. There is ample scope here for the play of imagination. Here is a field which, under the culture of a vivid fancy, is capable of producing theories and speculations suited to every variety of taste, every grade of intellect and every degree of culture.

In this chapter, John has a *mental, divine, and symbolical* vision of heaven: the “door is opened,” and a voice commands him to ascend and enter. The text leads us to infer :—

I. MAN IN HEAVEN HAS REACHED THE HIGHEST DIGNITY. He has “crowns.” We are not to suppose, of course, that there are material crowns in heaven ; these, whether formed

of gold, or diamonds, or both, are the mere toys of earth ; but it is used here as the emblem of the highest dignity. The earth has nothing higher to offer man than a crown : men have hazarded their lives, and waded through seas of blood, to get a crown. Because of the importance which universal man attaches to a crown, it is employed to represent the *dignity* of men in heaven. This crown is called in the New Testament "A crown of righteousness." Earthly crowns are often associated with iniquity ;—their history is one of violence and wrong. But the dignity reached by men in heaven will be "righteous,"—it will be in harmony with universal rectitude. There is no being in the universe that can charge them with having reached their position by unjust means. It is called "a crown of life." The crown which the victors in the Grecian games obtained, soon withered and died ; the weaved garlands soon became dust. The crowns which sovereigns wear in more modern times are corruptible, the diamonds will grow dim, and the gold will wear out ; but the crown of man in heaven is a "crown of life." It is not something put on, it is the expression of his Being. The crown is to the man what the blossom is to the tree, what the halo is to the sun,—something rising out of the being. It is called "a crown of glory." What is glory ? Paul says—"There is one glory of the sun and one of the stars ;" and we may say there is one glory of the earth and one of the heavens. The things to which men attach the idea of glory are puerilities in the estimation of Heaven. Take the most magnificently attired sovereign of the world, surpassing all other monarchs of the earth in the pomp and pageantry of his movements, What is the glory of that poor mortal, on which the empty crowd stares with wonder ?—it is only the glory of a gaudy actor on the stage, garbed in the tawdry and tinselled robe, put on for the hour for popular effect. But this is a glory altogether different ; it is the glory of an intellect in harmony with the truth, the glory of conscience in sympathy with the right, the glory of the soul centered in God ! What is there so glorious as a noble soul ?

If this be the state of man in heaven, let us :—First : *Have faith in the improbability of our nature.* When we look round upon society and see the gross sensuality, the dishonesty, the profanity of men, we feel disposed to loathe our very species ; but when we look to heaven, we feel that the worst are capable of improvement,—that “dry bones can live.” “Such were some of you,” &c. Secondly : *Let us be consoled under the departure by death of the good.* “I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me,” &c. “These are they that have come out of great tribulation,” &c. “Sorrow not as those who are without hope,” &c. Thirdly : *Let us not judge of providence without taking into account the future as well as the present.* “I reckon,” says the apostle, “that the sufferings of this present time,” &c.

II. MAN IN HEAVEN ASCRIBES THE DIGNITY HE HAS REACHED TO JESUS CHRIST. “They cast their crowns,” &c. This implies :—First : *A conviction that they owed all their honors to Christ.* Whence did they obtain their crowns? Secondly : *A readiness to acknowledge their obligation.* The greater our natures the more ready to acknowledge our obligation. Thirdly : *It implies the surpassing glories of Christ.* He is in the midst of the throne, and all ascribe their all to Him. Napoleon the First, after he had conquered empires, and planted his foot upon the neck of kingdoms, determined to be crowned Emperor. To give pageantry and lustre to the occasion, he compelled the Pope of Rome to be present. In the act of coronation, the Emperor refused to receive the crown from the Pope ; his proud spirit told him he had won it himself : he placed it upon his own brow, thus declaring to the spectators and the civilized world, the fact that he was indebted to himself only for imperial power. There is nothing of this spirit in heaven ; they all cast their crowns at the feet of Christ, and say, “Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory.”

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# Stars of Christendom.

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GREGORY OF NAZIANZ.

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*(Continued from page 347.)*

"All things combine, and are accumulated for the purpose of doing honor to this festive season, (Easter): see how beautiful is all that meets the eye! The queen of the seasons (Spring) is holding a festive pomp for the queen of days (Easter-day), and brings as an offering all that is the most costly and beautiful of her stores. The sky is already brighter, the sun is already higher in the heavens, and more golden; the moon's orbit is already more cheering, and the host of stars more bright; the waves are on more friendly terms with the shore, the clouds with the sun, the wind with the air, the earth with the plants, the plants with the eye. The fountains now flow more transparent; the rivers, loosed from the bands of winter, run in fuller stream; the meadow smells sweetly; the plants swell; the grass is being mowed; and young lambs are frisking on the fresh green plains. The ship now issues forth from the haven with loud, and often with holy, songs; it is winged with sails; the dolphin swims gaily around her, snuffing up, and again blowing forth, the water in delight, while it accompanies the mariner's course. The husbandman now puts his plough in order, and looks up in prayer to the Giver of fruits; he leads the ploughing-ox under the yoke, and divides the field with regular furrows, full of joyful hope. The shepherd and herdsman now play their pipes in harmony; they recommence their pastoral songs, and spend the spring amongst trees and rocks. The gardener tends his plants; the fowler prepares his rods and reeds, and looks up to the boughs to spy out their feathered inhabitants. The fisherman glances through the deep water, prepares his net, and takes his seat upon the rocks. The busy bee now spreads her wings; she leaves her hive, displays her sagacious instinct, and robs the flowers of their sweetness;—let her be to you a pattern of industry and wisdom! Now the bird builds its nest; one is sitting thereon, another glides softly into it, a third flits

round about, making the wood ring with its note, and flying round the dwellings of men with twittering tongue. All things praise and glorify God with inarticulate voices ; for all things thanks are now offered to God by me ; and thus that universal hymn is also ours, even that whose tones of praise I here express ..... Yes, it is now the spring of the world, the spring of the mind ; the spring for the souls of men, the spring for their bodies ; the visible spring, the invisible spring ; even that which we shall *there* participate in, if we are *here* transformed aright, and, having been renewed, enter upon a new and spiritual life."

Gregory had a peculiar and strong liking for retirement, and his life is a perpetual struggle between the inclination to studious repose and the duty of ecclesiastical activity.

He is, like the apostle John, surnamed Theologus, the Theologian, in a peculiar sense, from his strenuous advocacy of the doctrine that the Word or Logos was God. He is worthy of respect not only as teacher of the Nicene doctrine, but as promoting, to his utmost, practical godliness and Christian morality, in an age when the smiles of the great tended to weaken the vitality of the Church, and to corrupt the Christian profession. He has a different claim upon our gratitude from the influence which he exercised upon Jerome, who was brought to Constantinople by the attraction of his name, to hear his oratory and receive his private instruction.

The art of oratory, which he had learnt among the Greeks, was by him baptized and consecrated. His preaching was sometimes too artificial, and his sermons were by the polemics of the age and his own position rendered dogmatic rather than expository. Yet many of his products in this kind rank with the finest efforts of pulpit eloquence. His poems are in general somewhat prolix and dull, but his verses on his life are of exceeding interest, and his hymns are good.

The following are among his more prominent discourses : —Apology for his flight, on occasion of returning to his father after a visit to Basil ; —Oration when he was ordained ; —Two orations on occasion of Julian's death ; —Funeral orations for his brother, his father, Cyprian the martyr, Basil and Athanasius ; —Oration in praise of the Maccabees ; —Farewell oration in the Church of St. Sophia, before one hundred and fifty bishops. From this we have given the peroration above. There are many others extant, and the



rest of his works consist of Poems and Epistles. The best edition of his works is Morell's, according to the text of the Abbé de Billy, 2 vols. folio, Paris, 1630. The folio editions do not contain all the poems, many of which are to be found in a quarto by Tollins, Utrecht, 1696, reprinted 1706.

Blest Gregory, whose patriarchal height  
 Shed on the Eastern sphere celestial light,  
 To Nazianzum flew, dethroned by rage,  
 And spent in songs divine his drooping age.  
 Blest Gregory, with pain and sickness grieved,  
 His spirit oft with songs devout relieved ;  
 And while on hymns his meditation dwelt,  
 Devotion sweetened every pang he felt.  
 Blest Gregory to sacred verse consigned  
 The last efforts of his immortal mind,  
 Those poems loftiest prospects have disclosed,  
 On brink of bright eternity composed.

W. C.

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## Literary Notices.

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books ; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

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### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
 Since none can compass more than they intend.

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Memoir and Remains of the late Rev. JONATHAN GLYDE. Edited by the Rev. GEORGE W. CONDER, of Leeds. London : John Farquhar Shaw.

"My own idea of the nature of my work," says the genial and noble-souled Editor, "was not that I was to prepare a book for the public at large; the sphere of the subject of the memoir was too limited to warrant that." The reason here assigned for not preparing a book "for the public at large," is, we submit with deference, a strong reason why such a book should be so prepared. The more limited the sphere of a true and noble life, and no other life is worth publishing,

the more reason there is for making it public. As a rule, the men who fill the widest spheres of public life, in every department of action, supply the weakest reasons for a popular memoir. For, in the first place, they frequently least deserve it. Wide spheres are too generally obtained by the showy rather than the substantial,—by claptrap, accident, or patronage, rather than by intrinsic merit and solid worth. Many men have limited spheres, because their noble natures recoil from the conditions by which wide ones are won. The weaker intellectually and morally a man is, the more vain, and the more vain, the more anxious to become a popular idol. Little men are always climbing pedestals. To publish the memoir of such is to paint shadows, to fly kites. Society has everywhere pigmies in power, and the sight is truly grotesque. Lord Bacon says, "Little men in great places are like small busts on great pedestals, made to look more contemptible on account of their advancement." And in the second place where they deserve it, it is generally unnecessary. The most popular men write themselves so thoroughly upon the minds of men while living, that it is scarcely necessary to do anything for them in this way, when they are dead. Their doings are so generally chronicled, and their speeches and discourses are so widely published, that the world knows all about them. It seems to us, therefore, that the more limited the sphere of a great soul in life, the more reason for a popular memoir of him when dead.

We hail, therefore, this memoir of Mr. Glyde. The beautiful portrait which adorns the volume is more than an introduction to the life—it is a revelation. Read that high broad projecting brow, those genial and thoughtful eyes, azure orbs, shaded with that sadness that ever hangs over great souls; decipher those lips indicating the firmest purpose and the kindest heart; mark the benign, pensive, intelligent, communicative, countenance. What meaning there is in that "human face divine." Like the late lamented Robertson, of Brighton, whom Mr. Glyde resembled in more respects than one, the big brow, and the beautiful face, truly represent the capacious intellect and noble heart,—the great and lovely life. Men, true to such conformations, cannot be technical in thought, mean in sentiment, conventional in sympathy:—they must be original in conception, dignified in feeling, free and royal in operations, race-wide in their affinities. Nature never builds such palaces but for kings.

There are two ways of judging of departed excellence: from the showing of competent judges; and from its own revelations. We have both in this book. We have the lamented subject in this volume as he appeared to other noble souls, and in their eyes he is noble. Human greatness is relative. A very small man is great to a smaller one. The hero of the millions is a pigmy to the Shakspears. Very exalted is the conception which Messrs. Conder and Reynolds, them-

selves men of the higher type, formed of their noble neighbor, brother, and friend. The letter of Mr. Reynolds is a literary gem, discriminating and appreciative in judgment, overflowing with the tenderest feelings of bereaved friendship, and exquisitely beautiful in expression. But this volume gives us Mr. Glyde not only as reflected by the light of kindred souls, but as reflected by his own productions. His letters and his sermons are himself; they are not, as is too often the case, manufactures—they are self-evolutions; they seem as truly the expression of his nature as the stream is of the fountain, the fruit of the tree.

The Biographer has discharged his mission with the skill of an artist, the discrimination of a thinker, and the tenderness of a friend. His object has been not to show himself on the canvass, but to make every touch of his own bring out with greater truthfulness and prominence the departed brother whose excellencies fire and fill his own benign nature. Whilst Mr. Conder has laid the loving friends of Mr. Glyde under special obligation, his services will be appreciated by all who regard the perpetuation of human excellence, as one of the best means of reflecting the Divine, and helping on the progress of the human.

We close this memoir with a regret that such a spirit should have passed away from this mortal sphere, and that we should have had such little personal intercourse with it; and with a devout wish that the memory herein, so tenderly and tastefully embalmed, may, like the buried bones of the old prophets, strike a new life into the dead.

SERMONS by the REV. JOHN CAIRD, M.A., Minister of the Park Church, Glasgow. Edinburgh: Blackwood and Sons.

IN the Sermon, entitled "Religion, or Common Life," which Mr. Caird preached before Her Majesty, and published by her request, his name flamed on the world like a meteor, arresting the gaze of all readers. But unlike the meteor it passed not away, it became one of the brightest stars in the constellation of pulpit genius. Little did we imagine when we received a few months ago a note from the talented author, generously acknowledging benefits which he had received from our humble productions, that we should so soon have the opportunity of heartily reciprocating the feeling of obligation. Readers of "The Homilist" who have perused these discourses will anticipate the judgment which we shall pronounce. They approach closely that ideal which we at a painfully conscious distance struggle to attain.







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